

TALES
TALES OF TYPES,
and *LEGENDS,*
Stories of Devon.

BY
FRED^R. THOMAS.



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⊕ HUMOROUS ⊕

AND OTHER

POETIC PICTURES,

Legends and Stories of Devon.

BY

FREDERICK THOMAS.



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PREFACE.

“To their own merits modest men are dumb ;”
They ask a friend to blow and beat the drum !



Y Lords and Ladies, generous patrons all,
Thanks for your quick responses to my call.
When with this project to the post I started,
I own I felt a little chicken-hearted :
A thousand envelopes, stamped and directed ;
But, ah ! how many answers were expected !
Yet scarcely had a thousand minutes passed,
Ere my subscription list was filling fast :
A thousand kind replies ! Doubt dropped her fetters,
And I at once became “a man of letters !”
Now, my Pegasus, up ! and let this be
A Preface worthy of my modesty.

’Tis usual, as every reader knows,
To write the preface of a book in prose ;
But prefaces are dull things at the best,
Putting one’s patience to a frightful test,

And oft, instead of sharpening our desire
To read the book, intended to inspire,
The prosy spice becomes insipid, flat,
Enough to make a fellow smash his hat !
(Although to smash one's hat would be insane,
'Tis the last thing of which *I* should complain.)
'Tis in the preface authors try to show
They 've no conceit ; whilst all the time they blow
Their humble trumpets with that mighty flow,
Enough to crack the walls of Jericho.
Though on that head I should be "mum," indeed
I think it quite impossible to read
A more instructive, pleasant book than this.
"For mild conceit," you 'll say, "that 's not amiss."
My modesty is such, that were I asked to say
Who I considered greatest in his day,
I could not say myself—conceit 'twould be,
So I 'll pronounce for Shakespeare—after me !
What ! egotistic am I ? Oh, dear, no !
I hate that vice, and am prepared to show
His writings prove, in fifty different ways,
He was a hatter, with the "poet craze."
There 's much in common 'twixt great Will and I—
Othello proves he made a good black dye (die) ;
His power was felt, mine 's *felt* in what I do ;
His was a fertile brain, mine 's *fur-tile* too ;
Of course, when Shakespeare his crude works compiled,
He 'd not the priceless aid of Oscar Wilde,

Ruskin's opinion, and he'd never seen
Irving's black agony, nor Whistler's green :
I claim no merit for my great advances
On Shakespeare—Shakespeare never had my chances.

By some few friends, if friends they might be called,
For doing this I'm sadly overhauled :
With upraised hands, in horror they exclaim,

“ Oh, Thomas, Thomas, thou art much to blame !
Write not for profit, do as poets do,
Live for a name, and die not worth a sou.
'Tis glorious, 'tis grand, health, wealth to lose ;
Let earthly comforts pass, and hug the Muse.
Think of the Spartan boy, smile on and hide
The vicious beast that's gnawing your inside.
*'Three cities did contend for Homer dead,
Through which the living Homer begged his bread.'*
Aim at posterity ; the rhymes you utter
May some day wrap up—cheese and butter ! ”

Thanks, my good friends, for the advice you give ;
If all the same to you, I'd rather live
To reap the profit which my pen may earn,
And leave Posterity's pale lamp to burn.
A poet is not very much to blame
Who writes for profit sure, and chances fame,
And thinks that man almost a mortal sinner
Who courts the Muse and goes without his dinner.

Besides, Posterity may p'rhaps forget
They owed the poet any kind of debt,
Racking his brains by day and night to find
Food for a somewhat fickle public mind.
A hydra-headed power perplexing men
Whose daily bread depends upon their pen.
And oh ! how oft I thank my lucky fate
That I like some am not compelled to wait
A critic's verdict, but can choose my measure,
To write for profit and my patrons' pleasure.
'Twas Byron told us poets all were mad,
And says of proof there's plenty to be had.
But of all madness one type takes the lead—
"Mad as a hatter," and you're mad indeed.
Poetic madness takes such varied forms ;
Conceit in some hath most peculiar charms,
They think there's little wisdom in the head
Which, praising other bards, leaves *them* unread.
My head's not gone, I think, so far as that :
My great conceit lies chiefly in the hat.
There's one thing *I* believe this book will do.
Make you laugh heartily. Just look it through.
Because to make you laugh is my great aim,
With me or at me 'twill be all the same.
Thus, should I help you some dull hours to wile.
And in those hours incline your hearts to smile.
You will not, I contend, have lost your time,
And may admit there's reason in my rhyme.



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PoEtTIC PoICTURES

OF
SOUTH DEVON.

OF

SOUTH DEVON.

+

ST. DAVID'S STATION TO STARCROSS.



O wonder poets all delight to sing
In sweetest notes their praise of gushing Spring !
When verdant Nature dons her gayest dress,
And, virgin-like, steps forth in loveliness,
How pleasant 'tis to rise at dawn of day,
And watch the ever-varying sunbeams play
On hill and vale, and by their magic power
Bedeck, with sparkling gems, each fern and flower !
Oh, where, I ask, does bounteous Spring display
Her peerless beauty, in this month of May,
In rich profusion, with more lavish hand
Than on Devonia's coast, where sea and land

Blend gracefully ; where seaboard hill and dell
Create a spot where painters love to dwell ?
Come, citizen, with me—the morn is bright,
And let us from "Old Exon" take our flight ;
There's not a cloudlet in the bright blue heaven—

• • • • •

St. David's Station—fifteen after seven.
A splendid structure ; really 'tis a pity
They didn't build it closer to the city,
For one can almost fancy on the spot
He's in the Midlands, where of course he's not.
But hark ! the bell has gone, the whistle sounds,
The engine creaks, and from the station bounds.
And here a gleam of sunshine, warm and bright,
Bursts on St. David's Vale, as comes in sight
The ancient city, with its many spires,
Whose bells have spoken out of curfew fires ;
And, towering o'er the whole, with aspect bold,
The grand Cathedral frowning as of old,
When shorn St. Peter's Monks, in David's Vale,
With Friars of St. Thomas quaffed nut-brown ale.
Yet while we speak the scene has passed away,
And we seem running through a huge bouquet
Of apple blossom, shrubs, and fragrant flowers ;
Past Salmonpool and its historic bowers,
As quaint and rustic as when Edward, bent
On mischief, a most generous invite sent,

With artful greeting, to the Friars White,
And bade them come and taste his court's delight.
They lived like lords, and then returned elated,
To find meanwhile their all he'd confiscated.
Still stands the gabled lodge, though, like a dream,
All's passed, except the "strawberries and cream."
And now the charming landscape, bright and fair,
Each moment stretches out, whilst here and there
The cosy mansions of the worldly blest
Peep out like timid birds from sheltered nest.
Charming the view is now on either side,
As 'twixt its banks the silvery Exe doth glide.
A glance of Millbrook, with its ancient leat,
We catch in passing; then the snug Retreat,
Its mossy banks which kiss the silvery stream,
With sunlit breast, where countless diamonds gleam.
Look this way now, and Haldon Hills appear,
Crowned by the ivy-mantled Belvedere;
And wooded slopes of varied tinted hues,
Gazing on which in ecstasy we lose
All thoughts of worldly struggles, fears, and care,
To feast upon the scene, surpassing fair;
But oh! reminded by the engine's roar,
'Tis earthly all, and we ourselves once more.
See Woodbury heights, the clump of plume-like trees
Nodding their heads to every passing breeze;
The sheltered Harefield, Topsham, Nutwell Court,
Where p'rhaps the youthful Drake in childish sport

Reviewed his baby ships, nor dreamt that he
Should sweep the Spanish navy from the sea.
Then for a moment, 'twixt ourselves and Exe,
As if our vision sadly to perplex.
The well-known "Turf" stands out, oft said to be
A paradise of whitebait, shrimps, and tea.
Next 'fore our eyes a noble park is spread.
In which an ancient castle lifts its head
Amongst ancestral oaks, whose sturdy forms
Have stood full many a hundred winters' storms.
The little church, 'neath which the noble race
Of Devon's earls has found a resting-place,
The hassock, worn by Courtenays passed away,
Finds England's daughter kneeling there to-day ; *
E'en as she kneels associations rise,
And old traditions marshal 'fore our eyes—
The banner from the turret seems to say,
Prince William landed here but yesterday,
And honours my Lord Devon, who, you see,
Is famed around for "hospitalité."
The Park is passed, and I awake once more
To hear the waters rippling on the shore.
But yonder swan and cygnet plainly tells
We're at Starcross, where Captain Peacock dwells.

* Visit of Princess Louise.

If pleased with this first effort of my pen,
"Twill cheer my heart, and we 'll go on again.
But, ere we leave the spot, a word I 'd say
About an Institution which to-day
Stands as a monument of grand success,
Conceived and reared by love and tenderness.

The Western Counties Idiot Asylum, Starcross.

AN APPEAL.

Amid the many ills of human life
Which move our pity, and command our tears,
Awakening sympathies we would not stife,
That of the helpless idiot appears
Greater than all : the blind, lame, dumb have each
Some compensating rays their souls to light,
No beam of which can the poor idiot reach,
Whose life is one unbroken, changeless night.
For him there are no precious golden hours,
No sparkling ocean 'neath a bright blue sky ;
The blessed Spring, with all her fragrant flowers,
Glads not his heart, nor lights his vacant eye.
A sister's tender kiss, a mother's worth,
Love, playmates, friends, and all we hold most dear,
To him a blank ; the children's shout of mirth
And laughter falls unheeded on his ear ;
The thousand lavish blessings we enjoy
Are none of his ; but if 't is in our power

To light that life with one faint spark of joy,
'T will gild our own with many a sunny hour.
Then, where 't has pleased th' Almighty to bestow
That priceless blessing of a healthful mind,
Come ! let your sympathies abundant flow,
And "bread cast on the waters" may you find.





STARCROSS TO DAWLISH.



LAST week, my dear reader, I think you and I
Ended up at Starcross; and its name, by-the-bye,
Is derived from a very old stone cross, which once
Stood near to the spot where resides Sir John
Duntze.

But changed are the times since when, covered
with moss

And some Latin inscription, stood out the old cross;
When the monks of Torre Abbey would stop on their way
To Cowick or Exon, and kneel there to pray;
And the "sisters" of Mamhead in passing would rest,
For 't was looked on as one of the shrines of the blest;
And a spot in those days could, with blessing or curse,
Be "endowed" (just as now) on the strength of the purse.
But ages have gone since the matins were said,
And prayers for the soul of the beautiful dead;

For the cross marked the spot where the ill-fated bride
Of the chivalrous Gilbert de Kenton had died.

The Legend of Starcross.

The story runs thus in a legend—"Twas when
A feud 'twixt the houses of Chudleigh and Kenn
Existed, and when, with fanatical hate,
Religion (?) impelled the worst strife of the State:
When kings, for the sake of some bigoted scheme,
With dire persecution would draw forth a stream
Of Britons' best life-blood, and feel they had done
Good service to God, and salvation had won.

When the heads of these houses were teeming with hate,
There existed a love which no feud could abate.
For young Gilbert de Kenton loved fondly and well
Lord Chudleigh's sweet daughter, the fair Isabel,
And many a night, when 't was stormy and bleak,
Would young Gilbert cross Haldon to kiss her fair cheek.
But the old Lord of Chudleigh was haughty and proud,
And exclaimed, "I would rather a nunnery shroud
Enveloped my daughter, than that her fate
Should be linked with a house I've sworn ever to hate."
And the stern Lord of Kenton called Gilbert and said,
"My son, though I love thee, I'd rather thee dead
Than e'er it should happen that scion of mine
Had marred our escutcheon with Chudleigh's base line."

Young Gilbert rode sadly o'er Haldon that night,
And looked on the nunnery of Mamhead. A light
Gleamed forth from the old chapel windows—a bell
Seemed tolling as like to some funeral knell.
A funeral indeed, for the fair Isabel
Had "taken the veil," so this legend doth tell.
But Gilbert contrived, with the aid of a priest,
A dangerous scheme, and his love was released.
Assisted by Sister Helena at night,
And by the old priest (who had covered their flight),
Were the lovers made one in a chapel which stood
Near the classical region now known as Cock-wood.
From the time they left Mamhead an hour had scarce passed
When through Easton five horsemen rode furious and fast,
And the boatman, who waited where now stands the pier,
Beheld their approach with misgivings and fear.
They eyed him a moment, then each took a stand
In the shade, and old Jarvis saw danger at hand.
And now the faint clatter of hoofs from afar
Seemed mingled with waves breaking over the Bar,
And clearer each moment the trampling became
As the old Marley Beacon shot up a bright flame.
The fugitive riders—ne'er dreaming that they
So soon with their lives for devotion should pay—
Came rapidly on : then a terrible shriek,
Of which the old fishermen often would speak,
Was heard o'er the water on that fatal night
When the newly-made nun with her lover took flight.

And on the next morn, at the dawning of day,
Some boatmen discovered, when passing that way,
The beautiful Isabel dead on the ground.

While, floating near Lymppstone, a small boat was found
Capsized, showing marks that a struggle had been :
And Gilbert de Kenton was never more seen.

Now, whether this story be fiction or true,
Is of very small moment to me or to you :
For myself, I 've misgivings, yet still do my best
So you must imagine, and fill up the rest.

What became of the priest, or the boatmen, or nun.
There's no record to show, *if there ever was one*.
So we'll leave the stone cross, priest, lovers, and cloisters,
To whom it concerns in this village of oysters.

And now the broad estuary opens out bold,
And we come to the spot where (as tourists are told)
There's a fortune for all speculators who might
Be induced to take shares in the great "oyster Bight."
How suggestive the title, an attempt p'rhaps at wit,
For where there's a bite, some one has to be *bit*.

We next see the Warren, whose ultimate fate
Has caused some important discussions of late :
For when the tide rises it oft seems to say,
" Friend Warren, you 'd better get out of my way."
And, 'tis said, the Town Council, whose wisdom 's profound,
Intend with a chain to encircle it round,

Then fasten it up to Mount Pleasant, behind it,
So that, should the sea drown, they 'll be able to find it.
One member proposes—of whom it is said
There 's more to admire in his heart than his head—
That the use of the new city roller should be
To flatten the Warren, and roll back the sea !
And now the broad ocean, all sparkling and bright,
Seems dancing before us, as rise to our sight
The cliffs around Budleigh, and Sidmouth, and Beer—
But the sound of the whistle tells Dawlish is near,
Of which in our next we 'll have something to say,
And till then, my dear reader, I 'll wish you good-day.





DAWLISH.



NDULGENT, generous reader, not to say.
“ Thomas, give o'er, or go another way.”
I know the journey is insipid, flat,
With many other faults to grumble at,
And yet to make it readable I try ;
But there are “ doggerel bards ” as well as I,
Who, but for some kind noble patron’s aid,
Would cut a sorry figure I ’m afraid.
And there are “ noble authors ” too, who write
With guided pens and by a “ borrowed light.”
And there are critics ever standing by,
To write them up, and look with crooked eye
On some poor devil who, with merit real,
Dims life and soul to find his bairns a meal.
But as I write for pleasure more than pay,
Until my readers tire I ’ll scratch away.

You 'll find I promised, when we parted last,
And breaches in "the line" we passed,
That pretty Dawlish my next theme should be.
Yes, Dawlish, there are those who think of thee,
And more to "briny tears" than sea incline—
I mean, of course, shareholders in the line—
Where "Father Neptune," as if filled with spite,
Banged at "the rail" just here with all his might.
I wonder if the old chap saw the sign
Which says, "All trespassers upon this line
Will prosecuted be," and hurt his pride,
Remembering p'rhaps, when on the "other side,"
Ere Brunel came, the mermaids from the rocks
Would sally forth and kiss his sea-weed locks.
I fancy I can hear the old man say,
"'T is you who trespass on my freehold way.
Ask friend Pengelly if I 've not a right
To raise my voice and demonstrate my might !
I, who for ages more than man can tell,
Have played beneath those rocks I love so well !
You cut me off, my right by none disputed :
Threaten if I come near I 'm prosecuted ;
And grumble if I dare look o'er the wall.
'Shiver my timbers !' try it on, that's all."

.

'T is easy to imagine when the sea
Danced round the rocks in wild and foamy glee,

Before the iron road came rudely by
To mar the beauty and offend the eye.
And yet withal there is a pleasant grace
Of art and nature round about the place.
And here are those well-known fantastic rocks,
Whose strange tradition often sadly shocks
The nerves of those with no desire to rub
Their shoulders 'gainst the side of Be'lzebub ;
And here's a "native salt," and, like the rest
Of his fraternity, he'll do his best
To "spin a yarn ;" so, reader, rest awhile,
And, though 't may not instruct, 'twill make you smile.

Legend of the Parson and Clerk.

Old Jack sat out on the Langstone Point,
And nodding as if he'd his neck out of joint,
Said, "Perhaps your honours would like me to tell
The tale of these rocks, and the fate that befel
The Parson and Clerk for the dreadful crime
Of smuggling brandy in chapel-time ;
Sit down and I'll tell it.

Well, you must know,
It relates to a precious long time ago,
When of smugglers we'd a numerous host,
On and around Devonia's coast ;
When smuggling was a splendid trade,
And many a fellow his fortune made;

And even the squires, I've heard them say,
Would do a little in that way.

'Twas when our village here was small,
And Parson Grab was loved by all,
By fishermen and farmers too ;
All the excisemen well he knew,
And many a keg was stowed away,
Whilst good old Parson Grab and they
Were making merry up the town ;
So when the customs men came down,
No signs of a keg could they descry ;
And Parson Grab would wink his eye.
A Clerk had Parson Grab, one who,
Whatever his chief would say or do,
Would say and do it o'er again—
In fact he was a real 'Amen.'
If Parson Grab commenced to swear,
The Clerk looked on it as a prayer ;
To serve the priest was his delight ;
He viewed him as a 'shining light.'

One night old Captain Tubby came,
With pallid cheek and eyes of flame,
To ask at once the Parson's aid ;
'For,' said the Captain, 'I'm afraid
The cargo, part of which you know
Is yours, will very shortly go

To Davy Jones ; so come and say
What's best to do, without delay !
The storm's washed up some dreadful stones,
On which our little vessel groans.'
Then Parson Grab began to swear,
' Infernal fools to get her there ;
Why not keep farther off the land ?'
And saying this, he raised his hand,
And caught the Captain on the nose.
' Take that, you lubber !'—down he goes.
' You pretty set of coward elves,
To lose the ship and save yourselves ;
By finest cognac I swear,
In spite of rocks or breakers there,
To get each blessed keg ashore
This very night, or never more
Will I a sermon preach again.'
' Or I respond the loud Amen,'
The Clerk replied, and off they set ;
But, ere they reached the cove, were met
By the half-drowned, affrighted crew,
Who swore a light unearthly blue
Seemed dancing all around the wreck,
Whilst skipping up and down the deck,
Old Nick himself — But Parson G.
Exclaimed, ' That tale won't do for me,
For forty devils I'm a match !
Come, trusty Clerk, we 'll meet " Old Scratch." '

The crew were seized with greater fright,
Took to their heels, and out of sight
Were quickly; but a mighty roar
Was heard that night the county o'er.
The fishermen in wild alarm
Fled from the fury of the storm,
As if the tempests of the world
Were on the coast of Dawlish hurled.

When from the cliff next morn was seen
The spot near which the wreck had been ;
No vestige of it could they trace,
But, standing strangely in the place,
Two massive rocks, in which 'tis said
Are seen the Clerk's and Parson's head.
And fishermen, when out at night,
Declare strange phosphorescent light
Gleams from those rocks, where now we trace
The semblance of a human face."

Thus ends the legend ; but pray don't enquire
How I obtained it, as 'tis my desire,
For my own sake, to keep the secret well ;
And those who know me best perhaps can tell.
And as I've many others to relate
I can't stop now ; besides, the train won't wait.

There's something snug and cosy in the place :
It always has a bright and cheerful face ;

'The pretty town, its lovely, park-like green,
Flowing through which a rivulet clear is seen,
Spanned by new bridges, scattered here and there
Inviting seats, and easy garden-chair,
On which some convalescents idly lean,
Recruiting strength as they admire the scene.
On every hand the tourist can descry
Such scenes as cheer his heart and please his eye.
Backed by the graceful slopes of Luscombe Park,
Whilst in the foreground, say "the bounding barque"
(Just for poetic fancy) in full sail
Spreads out her snow-white sheets to kiss the gale.
The graceful sweep of coast, the pebbly shore,
The sandy promenade all dotted o'er
With happy children, who in merry glee
Watch their sand-castles melt in th'advancing sea,
And, ere the Prattling host can make retreat
The saucy wave has dared to wet their feet;
The joyous voices ringing loud and clear
As each succeeding billow washes near
Some wished-for trifle, the triumphant cry
When the last wave safe lands it high and dry.

On yonder seat, a little in the shade,
Is one who long ago perhaps has laid
His loved and cherished treasures in the grave,
And in his reverie, as wave on wave

Comes rippling to his feet, fancies that he
Is gliding with them o'er the jasper sea.
Then cheerful voices, and the scene has passed
To times long ere a cruel and mighty blast
Had crushed his brightest hopes, and on the shore
The prattling voices are his own once more.
And yonder, an old sailor deep in thought,
Perhaps on what he might have been, or ought.
I'll ask him gently, "Tell me, veteran, please,
Why dost thou look so sad and ill at ease?
Hath cruel Time dealt harshly with you?" say,
Why are those eyes so fixed upon the bay?"
The wrinkled son of Neptune raised his head,
And pointing o'er the waste of waters said,
"I see a splendid catch of mackerel there,
But that darned boat will frighten 'em, I swear."
"Oh, unpoetic mariner!" I said,
Gave him a lump of cavendish, and fled,
And quickly reached a more romantic place,
As an arch grin passed o'er that sailor's face.
See, "lovers' walks" beneath and o'er the cliff,
And caves fantastic, hollowed out as if
The artful god of love, in looking round
For "well-adapted premises," had found
The very spot with which he hoped to meet
In and around this snug marine retreat.
And, all in all, methinks we cannot boast
A brighter spot upon Devonia's coast.



DAWLISH AND TEIGNMOUTH.



RISE, my reader ; take your staff in hand ;
I'll show you lovely peeps of sea and land.
From Dawlish on to Teignmouth now we go.
And if you're not enchanted, tell me so.
What a delightful time o' year is June !
'T has one fault only, that 'tis gone too soon,
And, like its predecessor, "charming May,"
Inspires our love, and, laughing, runs away.
Then let us, whilst the roses are in bloom,
Enjoy the time, and breathe their sweet perfume.
In valleys, hedgerows, every sheltered nook.
Upon the hills and by the pebbly brook.
In the sweet flowerets that bedeck the land,
We see all-bounteous Nature's lavish hand ;
The very wildflowers seem to nod and say,
"Though some more fragrant, we're as bright as they."

All Nature seems to greet the genial sun,
Whose radiant glances beam, neglecting none.

I think we 'll go a little way by " rail,"
Then cross the line and mount the Smugglers' Vale,
Of which the county records plainly show
That, not so very many years ago,
The old red sandstone cave that 's still in sight
Was the wild scene of many a smuggler fight.
"Twas here " Will Rattenbury," then of Beer,
When closely chased, and night was drawing near,
Put in, and poured his " stuff " in " Johnstone's " vats,
And brought his boat to Seaton filled with sprats !
So, when the excisemen pounced upon " the boat,"
The people grinned, and Will sung " I 'm afloat."

Just here along the coast the sight is grand—
One that has oft engaged our Danby's hand.
The broad blue ocean and the verdant hills,
From which a hundred clear and rippling rills,
With pleasant music dance on to the sea,
O'er which the graceful gull soars bright and free.
But scarcely have we time to catch a sight,
When all around becomes as black as night ;
Then sunshine gleams again, and to the sea
We look, then dark again ; what can it be ?

• Thank Heaven we're in the light once more, and then
We view the bounding—hang it, dark again.
“Tunnels,” you say, and are there any more?
Then 'tis indeed a most tremendous *bore*.
Not half so pleasant, this nocturnal crawl,
As o'er the cliffs or by the broad sea wall,
On which the tourist may proceed with ease,
Fanned by the fresh invigorating breeze ;
Or we may follow by the Dawlish road,
Where many a favoured Briton's snug abode
We catch a glimpse of through the waving trees.
Then through a tiny loop the tourist sees
The rippling ocean sparkling in the sun,
And the whole scene indeed a pleasant one.
Then, standing out, like to some castle old,
Near to the sea, a building ; but we're told
“It looks not half so picturesque when near,”
Remarks our rustic friend, “as 't does from here.
'Tis one of those ‘brick monuments’ you see,
When first the line they made, which was to be
‘An atmospheric,’ and the building there
Was one of six for pumping in the air.
But very soon they knocked it on the head,
And the shareholders ‘*raised the wind*’ instead.”
I looked again, and thought 'twas very true,
That “distance lends enchantment to the view.”

What pretty rustic pictures on our way
We see, and the sweet scent of new-mown hay
In all its fragrant freshness fills the air ;
And busy mowers toiling here and there :
The warbling lark, of which the poets sing.
Whilst in some hayfield merry voices ring :
The butterfly in wild and happy glee
Seems dancing to the music of the bee.
But, reader, I will not presume to touch
A theme which poets whom we love so much
Have made their own, in language pure and sweet,
As makes all modern musings counterfeit.
Oh, shades of Bloomfield, Goldsmith, Cowper, White,
Direct my thoughts, and give me power to write
With something of that ring, so pure and true,
And which, alas ! has almost died with you.
But modern bards, perhaps, are not to blame ;
To meet the great demand of course they aim ;
And if we will have plenty for the money,
We must expect some treacle with the honey.
Some reader p'rhaps will say, with mind jocose,
“ Brimstone and treacle ” this, and strong the dose.

• . • . • . .
Yet who can help, where so much beauty reigns.
Musing, although in unpoetic strains ;
Around, about, there's so much to admire,
As would almost a misanthrope inspire.

All men ambitious are, and so am I,
But my ambition is to live and die
Mid scenes like these, removed from worldly strife,
Yet lead no less a useful, active life.
Ambitious "cits," who snarl, and bite, and vie,
And hate each other well, and know not why,
Who fume and fret your brightest hours away,
Pursuing phantom honours, that you may
Tack to your names some very pretty handle,
Only to find the "game not worth the candle!"
There yet are honours which, there's no denying,
That when attained are really worth the trying.
And there are men, and you and I have met them,
Who'd risk their health and happiness to get them,
And have gone far too early to their rest
With honours on the brain—not *on the breast*.
No wonder men who could in one short hour
Strike for themselves the road to place and power,
And thrust a hundred aspirants aside,
Prefer to 'scape the hollow din, and glide
Down to their graves in calm and peaceful ease,
And do their missions mid such scenes as these.

But see, the town of Teignmouth comes in view,
And here again, my friend, I'll say "Adieu"
'Till this day week, when I again will ask
Your presence to assist me in my task.



TEIGNMOUTH.



PERHAPS I should have thought, ere I'd begun,
That such a task was sooner said than done.
'Tis one thing to feel equal to the task,
Another to succeed. But where, I ask,
In what retreat, in what elysian bower,
That poet lives who underrates his power?

“ ‘T was ever thus’ with those who “jumble rhyme;”
We often think our “murdered themes” sublime.
And thus it is we blow our trumpets loud,
To get a hearing mid the doggerel crowd.
Methinks the God of Poesy’s a wag,
And often lends his power to some “tag-rag,”
Who uses it in sickening, fulsome praise
Of some conceited noodle, or in “lays”
Of soap and slaver, or in “halting strains”
To some rich patron with more cash than brains.

However poor or weak my verse may be,
That gift at least shall not be found in me.
My theme is not of men—yet there are those
To whom no mortal poetry nor prose
Could do full justice, nor assay their worth ;
Men who have laboured hard to make this earth
A fairer spot, whose deeds “return again,”
And should be sung by angels, not by men.
But from my subject I have bolted quite ;
We didn’t bargain for a serious flight.
Your pardon, pray ; I know digression’s vile,
But I’ve been looking round the place the while.

.

Who can on Teignmouth look, and not exclaim,
“Why, is it possible that ’tis the same !”
And yet the strange old church looks just as when
I saw it last. But, bless me, where’s “the Den” ?
Where is that ragged, bare, unsightly spot ?
I look around, but I can find it not.
Surely this promenade, this lovely green,
This handsome place which I to-day have seen,
Marks not the spot where one could scarcely stand
Without both eyes and boots being filled with sand.
And yet it is ; so I take off my hat
To all who laboured to accomplish that.
Go on, my friends (and be your efforts blest),
To make your town the Brighton of the West.

The ugly spots have all but disappeared,
And in their places handsome mansions reared ;
The town itself is greatly beautified,
Its narrow turnings opened clear and wide—
In fact, so much have they improved the place
That, though a friend, we scarcely know his face.
And yonder pier, too, helps to beautify
This charming watering-place—though, by-the-bye,
I scarcely can believe what I am told,
That soon 'twill be removed—in fact, "is sold."
If this be so, 'tis matter for regret.
It may not as a speculation pay, and yet
The pier could not but benefit the town,
And 'tis a sin, I think, to take it down.
"What!" says the lady, who with lightning eye
Looks out for those who would "the gate" pass by
Without a contribution to the cost,
And thus a mite be to the owners lost :
"Why, bless yer 'art, I sit sometimes all day
And see a hundred come and walk away.
They come and *peer* across the gate, and go—
They don't *appear* inclined to pay, you know ;
And thinks the *noble peer* who owns the land
Should say, 'that *noble pier* we've raised must stand.'
This *pier* has got *no peer*, and we can boast
That there *appears* nought like it round our coast.
Then why should we *appear* to be so mean
As charge a penny ere our *pier* is seen ?

Let it be free, we'd have no need to fear
That pier or public would soon dis-a-pier."

"Woman," I said, "these horrid puns give o'er."
She smiled and said, "I've got a hundred more."
Then to my heels I quickly took, and fled,
Calling down (let's say) blessings on her head ;
For there was wisdom in her speech withal,
And I believe to charge, however small
The toll for access to the pier may be,
Is clearly a short-sighted policy ;
For, looking round about, who can deny,
As all that's truly charming meets the eye,
That old Dame Nature has with lavish grace
Been generous to this lovely watering-place ?
A splendid space of sea we here behold,
On either hand the coast stands clear and bold,
Whilst in the background, sheltered and serene,
Are cosy villas looking o'er the scene.
It only needs judicious enterprise
To make this pretty town of Teignmouth rise
Into importance, and to take its stand
Amongst the favoured places of our land.
Of Shaldon, too, 'tis my intent to speak,
But that we'll leave, dear reader, till next week ;
When, if 'tis your desire, and all is well,
A most affecting legend I shall tell.



TEIGNMOUTH TO SHALDON.



COME, my Pegasus, jaded though thou art,
The time is up, and we at once must start ;
Shake up thy feathers, spread thy weary wings
Show signs of vigour whilst thy rider sings ;
Come now, be frisky, kick, prance, caper, neigh,
Show thy undoubted youth in any way !

Cupid may tire of throwing fatal darts,
Or fail, through age, to hit or injure hearts ;
Venus may lose her charms, and weep and sigh
For what the “gold of Ophir” cannot buy ;
Yet thou must show no signs of failing strength,
But bear my fancy flight to any length ;
And, goodness knows ! the poet’s much in need
Of boundless licence ere he can proceed—
A word sometimes won’t fit, but we must make it,
’Tis then the licence comes, and don’t we take it.

Poor, dull, insipid reading oft 'twould be,
But for the romance which the poets see ;
Why e'en Macaulay said, "T'was useless quite,
A history or biography to write,
Without a savoury spice was well diffused,
Which, by-the-bye, he very freely used :
And surely, most indulgent reader, when
Such a tremendous giant of the pen
Makes this confession, how can you deny
"The poet's haven" to us smaller fry ?

•

"The season" now at Teignmouth has begun,
And all who take but just a run
Down from Old Exon, to inhale the sweet,
Invigorating air, enjoy the treat.
How pleasant is a stroll along the sands,
To watch the children with their tiny hands
Build up a fortress or a sandy mound,
And hear the shout as waves come washing round,
Or see on older faces the bright smile,
When business cares are shunted for awhile.
A glance around, 'tis easy to behold
What some men risk in the pursuit of gold.
O Mammon, Mammon, what a power is thine !
How many thousands at thy yellow shrine
Are sacrificed, in little man's desire
Some splendid passing nothing to acquire !

The careworn faces, and the faded looks,
Too clearly tell the tale of office books ;
“They only need a little rest,” and then
They’re off to town, and at the books again ;
But to return next year with shattered health,
The oft exacted tribute paid to wealth.
Ah ! ye whom a kind Providence hath blest
With ample means of ease and quiet rest,
Who have no need to rack your blessed brains
To keep a home, or swell another’s gains—
Who, when ye need a change, no power debars,
“Down on your knees,” and thank your lucky stars.

“Tis easy to observe, in many a face,
What brings it often to a watering-place.
Some are so well conditioned and well dressed,
‘Tis very clear they come to quiz the rest.
See yonder lady with a pretty face,
Her step, her style, all elegance and grace ;
With gloves too tight, and boots by far too small,
And less expression than a waxen doll.
Yonder we see the aimless, brainless swell,
Who through his eye-glass sees a “dem fine gell,”
And fancies every woman in the place
Delights to look upon his pasty face.
But, ere we pass on to the Shaldon side,
Let’s sit and watch the swiftly-ebbing tide,

Or view the lighthouse, standing firm and clear,
To warn the mariner that danger's near.
Or let us for a moment stop and see
That noble effort of philanthropy—
The Teignmouth lifeboat, trim and all compact,
And ready at a moment's call to act ;
“With lightened heart,” obedient to the crew,
Who know no fear with dangerous work to do.

“God speed the boat,” our prayer shall ever be,
“May she glide swiftly o'er the angry sea :
And bless the men who risk their lives to save
A fellow-mortal from an ocean grave.”

And here we cross the noble Teign, the same
From which the pretty town receives its name,
A lovely river from its very source
Throughout to where we stand ; but then, of course,
I must not from my subject run away,
As we can mount the Teign another day.
And yet, in fancy, up the Teign I stroll,
And hear it o'er the granite pebbles roll,
Broad at its base, till Newton's town appears ;
Then graceful sheltered windings, till it nears
Romantic Dunsford, splashing, dancing o'er
A hundred cascades, till we reach the Moor,

When one might place his foot and stop the rise
Of this wide river stretched before our eyes.
The Shaldon Bridge, which spans the river here,
Has (but with one exception) no compeer
Throughout the whole of Europe for its length (?)
But nothing shall I say about its strength,
Which I suppose is quite enough to bear
What little traffic daily passes there.
Now, safely landed on the Shaldon shore,
We 'll start at once the region to explore ;
For it is said that traces can be found
To show 'tis sacred and romantic ground.





SHALDON AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD.



HALL I feel vexed or pleased? I think the latter,
And yet am half inclined to bellow, "What's the
matter?"

Why nearly twenty letters I've received,
From which, 'tis plain, the writers all believed
"Twas want of matter, more than want of space,
Which gave my pen another week of grace,
And clearly indicate a sort of doubt
As to my being fairly "crowded out."
Associations Scientific were the cause—
To give them space I was compelled to pause;
To Art and Science we must all give way,
And you can read my doggerel any day.
So when the *savans* of our merrie shire
To flights of learning would our minds inspire,
It's only right and proper then that I
Should stand aside whilst Science marches by.

Britannia's "Arkies," who this week have met,
In search, no doubt, of useful knowledge—let
Me raise my hat in wishing that ye may
Increase in strength and number every day.
And to the founder of these useful clubs
I pay respect profound—to thee, "Bill Stubbs!"

And now our journey we'll at once resume,
Because 'tis only mortal to presume
You're very anxious, after this delay,
To hear what I of Shaldon have to say.
In many a spot round Shaldon we may trace
The haunts and relics of a bygone race.
Time was when the hyæna's mocking roar
Resounded o'er the waters from that shore ;
Time was when ancient Briton, bare and brave,
Here speared the howling wolf, or o'er the wave,
In search of food, in his canoe would glide,
Or visit chieftains on the other side.
The towering cliff still frowning as of old,
When painted natives, dauntless, grim, and bold,
Watched eager from its heights, ere Cæsar came
To add another laurel to his fame.
And later, Shaldon has beheld such scenes
Of which the modern Briton little dreams.
And later still, when by the cruel decree
Of the invader, brightly gleamed the sea,

And Teignmouth was a mass of glowing fire,
To gratify man's doubly cursed desire.
How changed since then, when mothers, children, wives,
In terror madly rushed to save their lives,
And in the exodus to Shaldon shore
Sank many a "mother's joy," to rise no more.
But now there's such an air of calm repose,
And as we look its varied beauty grows;
The verdant slopes all rich with ferns and flowers—
Here botanists may spend some pleasant hours.
Lord Clifford's snug retreat, too, seems to grace
The sweet poetic quiet of the place.
But there's a story of an ancient date,
For which you've had some little time to wait.
'Twill doubtless move your sympathy and mirth,
But here it is—take it for what 'tis worth.

The Amorous Friar of St. Labrador.

'Twas just at the time when, as old stories say,
The Father Confessors had much their own way;
And when, as we're told, neither "knight nor squire
Could live half so well as a holy friar;"
When in spite of the cowl and the well shaven pate,
The life of a friar was no horrible fate;
For their round, sleek, and jolly fat faces at least
Spoke less of the fastings and more of the feast.

When they never neglected, mid duties, to dine,
And were excellent judges of “ women and wine,”
And ’tis said, but perhaps ’tis said only in fun,
That to see a “ sweet girl ” was to wish her a nun.
Well, ’twas when a snug abbey, all sheltered by trees,
Stood near to the spot where the tourist now sees
A cluster of houses, Coombe Cellars by name,
And I see by the chart ’twas called always the same.
The monks of this abbey would often stroll out,
And one day Brother Francis was looking about,
When by accident—surely ’twas never design—
He met in the valley a creature divine.
He gazed on her face, and her beautiful form :
Though the spot was sequestered, she felt no alarm ;
For she knew that protection she couldn’t require,
As she was a woman, and he was a friar.
Yet she fancied she saw, though she couldn’t tell why,
An expression by no means unkind in his eye.
And Francis was handsome, young, courteous ; so when
He smiled on her kindly, she smiled back again.
And oh, it is not in my province to tell
How often by chance (?) did they meet in that dell.
But Francis was son of a chivalrous sire,
And there burned in his bosom no treacherous desire ;
Still, affection for woman’s a horrible taint
Though indulged in by sinners, ’twas wrong in a saint—
That they’d made him a soldier, ’twere better by far
Than a monk of the order of St. Labrador.

I've no wish to defend him ('twas wrong of them both),
He thought more of the maid than he did of his oath ;
Yet at parting, sometimes, when he'd kiss her fair brow,
Like a culprit he felt, as he thought of his vow.
But Love, mighty engine of Nature's decree,
The will of mankind is a puppet to thee ;
And Francis resolved that his celibate life
Should end—he had sworn to make Lilian his wife.
And why should the vow so much joy intercept ?
A bad oath is by far better broken than kept. /

But Francis was not here the only good friar
Whom Lilian's rare loveliness seemed to inspire,
For there wasn't a brother about the old place
But would walk any distance to look on her face.
There was one brother, Joseph, whose sapient smile
Told plainly his heart was unsullied by guile ;
For his prayers were the loudest, his fastings were great,
Yet there burned in his breast a volcano of hate.
His keen eyes had detected who stood in his way,
And he mused in his mind on the game he should play ;
For he had in his heart an unholy desire,
Which he'd risk both his body and soul to acquire ;
Not quite the first monk who's been willing to play
A dangerous game when there's aught in his way.

"T'was the feast of St. Peter, and friars are men,
So they drank the saint's mem'ry again and again ;
And brother Barabbas felt just at his best
For making them roar at his orthodox jest.
And Thomas of Newton, and Esau of Torre,
Were always invited to Labrador.
For Esau was witty, and Thomas could sing,
And with shouts of delight the old abbey would ring,
Whilst their jolly bright faces all beamed round the board,
Which groaned 'neath the choicest the world could afford ;
And Brother "Pugnacious," who'd taken his share
Of wine, then proposed, in a jocular air,
As he fastened the window and lowered his voice,
And each drank, in a whisper, "The girl of his choice."
Then Brother Elias, to keep up the game,
Proposed the first letter of each lady's name
Should be written, and under a punch bowl be placed,
With, of course, no desire the whole name should be traced.
But on lifting the bowl, Father John gave a yell,
When he found each had written a capital L.
The shout of loud laughter quite shook the old place,
And Joseph scowled strangely in Francis's face,
For he thought but for Francis his way would be clear,
And a smile crossed his features on thinking that near
The spot where his rival "appointment" would keep
With Lilian, the river flowed silent and deep.
But Lilian had told Brother Francis that when
They parted one night she was met in the glen

By the sanctified Joseph, whose evident aim
Showed his life was a libel, at least on his name.
But she spurned his advances, as Francis well knew ;
And they planned for the future unconscious of who
Was eagerly watching them, like a wild beast
In hunger preparing to spring on its feast.

The bell of the abbey for vespers had rung,
The prayers had been said, and the hymns had been sung,
And yet Brother Francis was not in his place,
Though he never was known to ask ten minutes' grace ;
Yet they felt at his absence but little alarm
Till there broke o'er the abbey a terrible storm ;
And when it abated, at once 'twas resolved,
That a search should be made, and the mystery solved.
The torches were lit, and they searched all around,
But, alas ! Brother Francis could nowhere be found ;
And Joseph turned pale, when a yeoman next day
Related last night he was passing that way,
And heard near the river a cry of distress,
And there hurriedly passed him a man in the dress
Which he knew to be that of a Labrador Friar,
And who answered him not when he stopped to enquire
If "the father" that shout from the water had heard,
He looked not, nor spoke, but flew on like a bird.
And a boatman, who'd left Bishopsteignton that night,
Declared, whilst in crossing the Teign, a strange sight

Passed rapidly seawards, quite close to his boat,
Like the corpse of a monk, with a gash in his throat.

But as of all friends he loved Francis the best,
No wonder that Joseph was sorely distressed !
And e'en when they gave up the search in despair,
Alone to the valley went Joseph—for prayer !
But Lilian, who waited for Francis next night,
Found Joseph there waiting, and flew from his sight,
And though oft to that valley the monk would repair,
It was never his lot to meet Lilian there ;
For the maid knew the story the boatman had told,
Yet she could not her secret suspicion unfold ;
But to look on the maiden 'twas easy to trace
The grief of her heart in her sorrowful face.

• • • • •

But woman, O woman, the poets have said
That thy love seldom lives when thy lover is dead !
'Tis not my desire so unkindly to speak,
For maidens are mortal, and woman is weak ;
And I grieve to confess that in less than a year
No maiden round Shaldon was brighter than her ;
For a handsome young yeoman had come to this part,
And she'd made an impression not slight on his heart.
He heard that she mourned for a lover now dead,
But pressing his suit perseveringly, said,

"Let the past be forgotten, much better 'twill be
Than to mourn a dead lover, and gaze on the sea."
Oh, sentiment ! sentiment ! come to my aid,
For, in spite of romance, I feel like the maid.
She couldn't his love and his logic withstand.
And she blushed like the rose as she gave him her hand.
And there was not in Devon a homestead more bright,
For as years flitted on 'twas a beautiful sight
To behold, as the shadows of evening fell,
A group of sweet faces in Labrador dell.

But life is as fleeting as shadows of eve,
We do but prepare in the coming to leave,
Though his days had been happy, his pathway been fair,
It had wrinkled the forehead and silvered the hair.
And Time had dealt roughly with monast'ries too,
For Cranmer had counselled what Harry should do.
So Harry had stamped on the Pope's "just decree,"
Recanted his faith and his pledges, that he
Might take a fresh wife, without trouble or fear.
"My dear Cranmer has got the right sow by the ear!"
"Bluff Harry" exclaimed, and licence was given
To plunder the Abbeys, and Fathers were driven
From off their possessions and lands, which to-day
Are held by successors in much the same way—
A kind of dog-rob-dog "high prigs" of the hour,
Who fiddled and danced to the creatures in power,

And plundered the weak as they loaded their maws,
For the glory and good (as they said) of "the cause;"
But when, in their turn, they're called on to "stand,"
"And deliver" a part of the plunder in hand,
They turn up the whites of their eyes in dismay—
In fact, to be coarse, there's the devil to pay;
And well paid he'll be, with good interest to it,
Though it take all the priests and the bishops to do it.
Religion, to man's everlasting disgrace,
What deeds 'neath thy cloak and thy name can we trace!
Fanatics have waded through rivers of gore,
In the vain hope of reaching, all blood-stained, that shore
Where none but the spotless and cleansèd can stand,
But sealed to the creature with blood on his hand.

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The Abbeys of Buckfastleigh, Totnes, and Torre,
With Bovey, and Newton, and Labrador,
Were silent; the night birds were screeching around,
Where once nought but comfort and plenty were found,
But, though the Pope's voice in Great Britain was hushed,
And the monasteries rifled, "the faith" was not crushed,
For Shaldon had many inhabitants who
To the creed of their fathers were loyal and true;
And old Father Robert, whose genial face
Was his guard and his password all over the place,
He loved the old spot, and determined to stay
When the monks from the abbey were driven away.

Beloved by the children, respected by all,
He was heartily greeted wherever he'd call ;
But no one so welcome as he to a seat
In the house of the yeoman ; and oft at his feet
Had the children of Lilian sat with delight,
To hear the old stories he'd tell them at night.
But the children had grown into manhood's estate,
And Lilian had answered the summons of fate,
And oft was the yeoman seen kneeling to pray,
Where the wreath of dead lilies lay rotting away.
Ah ! where is that being who has not a tear
Ever ready to start at some memory dear ?
How often a sweet recollection imparts
A softening tone to the sternest of hearts.
But the yeoman comes not to the grave as before,
Nor is seen in the old rustic seat at his door.

• • • • •

The sun in its radiance westward had rolled,
Illuming the heavens with crimson and gold ;
The sweet zephyr breeze, as it floated along,
Seemed to silence the birds in their evening song.
The sea round the coast came not in with a roar,
But murmured and sighed as it broke on the shore ;
So calm and serene was the close of that day,
When the old yeoman's life was fast ebbing away.
And as Father Robert knelt down by the bed,
The dying man turned on his pillow, and said,

"Holy Father, a secret I wish to impart,
Which for fifty long years has been locked in my heart ;
Take this key, and in yonder old closet you 'll find
What may bring something vividly back to your mind.
How oft to my children have I heard thee tell
Of the monk who was murdered in Labrador dell."
To obey, Father Robert felt strangely impelled.
He opened the closet, and there he beheld
The dress of a friar, with a cross and a star,
Worn often by Francis of Labrador.

"Great heavens !" cried Robert, " how didst thou possess
Brother Francis's emblems—that girdle ! that dress !
Wert thou his assassin ? Speak quickly, I say,
For, wouldst thou be absolved, there 's no time for delay."
" Be calm, holy Father, thou needest not fear
There is blood on my soul, but the truth thou shalt hear :
When Francis was missing, they mourned him as dead,
For they knew the next day what the boatman had said.
That boatman, whom oft thou hast seen at my door,
Kept his secret right well ; but he, too, is no more.
He took Brother Francis to Teignmouth that night
In the garb of a sailor. Aware of his flight
Was a beautiful girl, whom, dear Robert, we knew ;
But she loved Brother Francis, and Francis was true ;
And oft the old boatman had news to impart
(On return from a cruise) which would gladden her heart.
About a year after, at dawn of the day,
A yeoman from Salterton journeyed that way.

He settled near Shaldon, and took for a wife
The girl for whom Francis had risked more than life.
That maiden was Lilian ! and now, ere I die,
Dear Father, absolve me—that Francis am I !”

And thus, dear gentle reader, ends my tale,
Which has become by this time precious stale ;
For like enough the sequel’s been so clear
That you beheld the end before ’twas near.
'Tis well indeed for me, I ne'er can tell
What names you call me ; and 'tis quite as well
I do not hear them, or 'twould grieve me sore,
And likely stop my pen for evermore :
A merciful arrangement in this life.
I only fancy what a world of strife
This earth would be, if every loving brother
Knew what was said and thought of one another.
I often fancy, if some magic power
Could make us crystal, just for half an hour ;
Show all the thoughts and motives of mankind ;
Oh, what a pretty picture we should find !
Perhaps the highest person in the state
Conferring honour with regret and hate ;
A laurelled hero, accident of war,
Grinning to think what precious fools we are ;
And leaders too, with patriotic cry,
And something more than glory in their eye.

Then some we'd see, in Charity's good name,
For self and friends play quite another game,
Resort to every kind of artful shift,
To give themselves and hobby-horse a lift ;
But these need not be made of crystal stuff,
Their objects are transparent quite enough.
And in "society" what fun 't would be,
When Mrs. A. invites "dear" Mrs. B. ;
Admire each other's carriage, laud their "place,"
And long to smack each other's pretty face.
The burning hate in Miss Debeavor's breast,
Because she finds that vile Miss Linsey dressed
Just like herself, and she resolves to scout
The milliner who let her secret out.
I've no desire just now to lift the veil ;
Besides, this gossip's foreign to my tale ;
And that being ended, we'll at once take flight
To subjects livelier and scenes more bright.





SHALDON TO BISHOPSTEIGNTON,

AND ON TO NEWTON.



JUST here I feel I'm in an awkward plight,
Two roads are open now—but which is right ?
Shall I take Newton first, and Torquay next,
Or Torquay first? I really am perplexed ;
And yet I think the proper course would be,
Take Newton first, en route for famed Torquay.

So come, my brother tourist, take thy staff,
And on our road I'll try to make thee laugh,
If only at the weakness I'll display
In my descriptive efforts on our way.

Recross the bridge from Shaldon, and we find
The town of Teignmouth has been left behind ;
Some charming villas, nestling as it were
To 'scape the bleak, but kiss the balmy air.

But ere we on to Newton speed our way,
Just for a moment, brother tourist, stay—
A little grave on yonder slope I see,
And yet in such a spot it cannot be.
“It is a grave,” said some one standing by,
And as he spoke I fancied in his eye
A tear had started. Surely ‘twas not so,
For, as I read, the inscription went to show
A faithful dog, beloved by all around,
Within this charming spot a grave had found.
No wonder man will sometimes mark the place
Where rests a friend, whose faithful, honest face
Knew no deception, and in weal or woe
Would ever true and fond affection show.
To call a man “a dog,” you hurt him sore,
Sometimes methinks ‘twould hurt the dog much more :
Let’s read the lines a son of Mars has writ,
Who loved his dog, but can’t restrain his wit :

“Here lies my Leo ; he a *lie* ne’er told,
But loved his master more than men love gold,
Faithful through life, he ne’er betrayed a trust,
How strange that he should here *lie* in the dust;
His mission now fulfilled, he’s nought to dread,
And kings might envy him his peaceful bed.”

A very graceful compliment, I say,
And not so badly written, Colonel K——;

Were I a toady I might shout “sublime !”
Yet I can say with truth 'tis dog-gerel rhyme.
And surely, you 'll admit, he ought to know
Who keeps in hand himself a doggerel flow.

But we must on, for every step we take
To minds poetic fresh suggestions make.
Now in a lovely valley we descry
Some targets, where Devonia's daughters vie
In peaceful prowess, with the bow and dart,
Striking at once, perhaps, bull's eye and heart.
Oh, skilful matrons, who so well contrive
To keep flirtation's pleasures all alive !
Oh, blessed croquet, garden parties too,
And flower shows ! Whatever should we do
Without these means to spend some pleasant hours,
Where Devon's daughters are the sweetest flowers ;
And where, if I 'd my way, I 'd give the prize
Unto the choicest rose with brightest eyes.
And so in archery, dear girls, aim true ;
Shoot for the prize, and win a husband too.
'Tis most suggestive ; archery, you know,
Teaches the lady how to hold her *beau* ;
But is it fair in me, whilst passing by,
To be so hard, or for a moment try,
By words of mine, or by my halting pen,
To check the only chance for bashful men ?

Methinks I hear the ladies say, " You dunce,
Take up your pen, and leave the place at once,
Or, in the absence of a pond or river,
Our well-shot arrows, sir, shall make you quiver."
I take the hint in fancy, and retire
Before these fair Dianas open fire.

We mount the hill, and here the lovely Teign
Is in its most imposing aspect seen,
Stretching out grandly, flowing free and wide,
With wooded outlines on the other side.
And from this spot, Shaldon, as we look down,
Seems like some little continental town,
So quaint and straggling, beautiful withal.
The whole locality here seems to recall
What Danby's graphic pencil has portrayed,
And by his truthful master-hand has made
The British tourist long to see the place
Where spots so lovely are on Nature's face.
A pleasant road we follow on our way
To Bishopsteignton ; and here let us pay
A well-deservèd compliment to those
Who tend the sacred spot, where thickly grows
The lily o'er the graves so neatly kept,
And where the ivy, like some friend, has crept
Around the pretty church with mantle green,
Lending the charm of romance to the scene.

No wonder painters, poets, love the spot !
But who, I ask, could look around, and not ?
As we proceed the Dartmoor hills appear
Crowned by old Haytor rock, whilst in the rear
The cliffs of Shaldon and the ocean bright,
In all a picturesque and pleasant sight.
The groups of reapers mid the golden grain,
The team of horses passing up the lane.
The happy faces and the rustic song
Of youthful gleaners, as they pass along,
Proud of the load they bear, the mother's smile
As on the cottage floor their sheaves they pile.
The thrifty housewife, careful of each ear--

But cease these musings, Newton Abbot's near !
And as this town has taken some small part
In England's history, let's arrange to start
Our ramble o'er the very many spots
Of interest in Newton—there are lots ;
So, by your leave, I'll lay my pencil down,
And take it up, next week, in Newton town





NEWTON AND NEIGHBOURHOOD.



ACAU^LAY tells us, in his graphic way,
The part our "Merrie Shire" was wont to play,
When feudal lords, despotic, proud, and grand,
With kings and princes took an equal stand ;
When chivalry ran high, and blood ran blue,
And the broad lands belonged to but a few.

The word "belonged" is p'rhaps not to the letter,
But, there, the least we say of that the better.
They held the lands, that's certain, wrong or right,
And those who would contest it had to fight,
Somewhat the same as now in that respect ;
The weaker side had better far reflect,
Than rashly enter on a hopeless fray
Where might is pretty sure to gain the day.

'Time was when this fair county was accursed
By powerful fiends, with vile insatiate thirst

For cruel vengeance on defenceless heads,
And yeomen's blameless lives but hung on threads ;
When bloody Jeffreys and the vampire Kirk
Gloried and gloated o'er their fiendish work ;
When loving wives were ordered out to see
Their husbands hanging on the village tree ;
And Newton town, 'tis said, in days gone by,
Has been the scene of many a feudal shy.
Here rival barons cracked each other's pate.
Or sent the falcon up at Stover Gate.
But though the days of chivalry are past,
And feudal bile has settled down at last,
Around old Newton everywhere we see
Some grand old spot of ancient chivalry ;
The lines of Courtenay, and of Ogwell too,
The ancient seats of Seymour and Carew ;
And many legends can each house relate,
In fact or fiction, prowess, love, or hate.
And where's the ancient home without a story
Of daring sacrifice, of blood and glory,
Of firm devotion to some royal cad,
Or "how the lady Annibal" was sad,
And pined away in yonder crumbling tower,
Where sighs are often heard at "witching hour" ?
Methinks in feudal days the local bard
Oft found his lot in life by no means hard ;
And I have wished I'd flourished in those times,
And turned the local legends into rhymes.

'Tis not too late ; if any " Ancient Head,"
In this fair county, should desire a thread
Of gushing romance round the name entwine,
I'll do the thing at two-and-six per line.

I'd tell how, on a dark and stormy night,
The watchman said a dim and yellow light
Beneath the Lady Judy's window danced,
Whilst near the gates a red-hot charger pranced.
The morning came, and bitter grief profound
Reigned round that house. Judy could not be found ;
They searched the grounds, pulled up the kitchen floor,
" But the sweet Judy was beheld no more."

'Twas thought a sorceress, who lived hard by,
Had on the lady cast an evil eye.
So she was burned, her husband too was drowned,
And yet the Lady Judy was not found.
Long years rolled by, when rumour came at length,
Which, on enquiry, seemed to gain in strength,
That Lady Judy had—oh, sad to tell !—
Married a baker, and was doing well.

.
There's romance for you ! and I do contend
The story has a very *floury* end ;
And up to standard too, as legends go ;
So, should you want my aid, pray let me know.
But there are county legends quite enough,
And far more readable than this mad stuff,

And spots of interest of substantial sort,
Thus there's no need to fiction to resort.

From Newton Abbot, strike out any way,
And there are spots which richly will repay
The tourist for the trouble he may take
To keep his eye for beauty wide awake.
To Coombeinteignhead, on a sunny day,
And pretty Highweek too, with verdure gay ;
Or stroll to Wolborough, where sweet flowers grace
The graves about this pretty resting-place ;
Or on to Haytor, whose bold crown we leave
To come upon the far-famed Lustleigh Cleeve—
A spot so beautiful, romantic, wild,
With massive granite rocks fantastic piled,
As if some giant army here had fought,
And all the hugest stones in Britain brought
To crush each other in a wild *mélée*.
Leaving the battle-field as now we see
The quiet town of Moreton, Fingle Bridge,
And breezy Sharptor, with its mossy ridge,
Old Cranbrook Castle, from whose pleasant height
Do we behold a panoramic sight ;
From here we see near half the county o'er,
And glimpses of the lands beyond the Moor,
Whilst here and there stand out before the eye
The mighty Tors, which seem to touch the sky.

From Newton, Bovey Tracey's quickly reached,
And there a spot on which John Wesley preached.
I wish that "spot" was by his spirit haunted,
For, looking round, just here 'tis sadly wanted.
Need I write more of Bovey in this space?
There's too much "Rit" already 'bout the place.
Not far from here is Chudleigh's famous vale,
Of which they tell a most romantic tale:
How once an ancient Baron's only child
By pixies to the cavern was beguiled,
And there surrounded by a fairy ring,
And forced to marry with the pixy king.
But we can't spare the time just now to dwell
Upon the pixy lore of Chudleigh dell;
But back to Newton, where the quaint old tower
Suggests the time when the Third William's power
Was in its birth, and everything looked gay
As he of "Orange" proudly passed that way.

Let us in fancy look upon the scene—
The loud huzzahs as William crossed the Teign,
The "proclamation," and the cringing lords,
Who smiled and wept and played their double cards,
Not feeling sure his game would bring success,
And so desired to 'scape an awkward mess;
Feasted and *fited*, yet felt half afraid
To take a side until his mark he'd made.

Talk of the good old times, the golden days,
Which maudlin poets sing in funereal lays,
As if they felt like beings broken-hearted
At all worth having in this world departed !
I 've only one wish with regard to these :
It is that every gushing bard—who sees
In days of yore so very much to praise—
That he himself had lived in those blest days ;
Of this we should be pretty sure, at least,
That by this time his ravings would have ceased.

But I must pause, as p'rhaps the time will be
When critics may with truth complain of me ;
And as next week we stroll a pleasant way,
I 'll not be spiteful, nor desire to say
A single word to mar the pleasant flow
Of sociability, as on we go,
O'er hill and dale, rich in primeval traces,
Towards Torquay, "the queen of watering-places."





TO TORQUAY,

*BY WAY OF BABBICOMBE, ANSTEY'S COVE,
MARYCHURCH, AND BISHOPSTOWE.*



INDULGENT reader, see, I've kept my word,
Although our rambles have been oft deferred ;
And yet not always has it been my fault
That on our journey we saw fit to halt.

Then on we go, yet must our steps retrace,
As Shaldon was to be our starting-place,
To reach Torquay along the line of coast,
Which doth such charming bays and inlets boast.
No wonder Dibdin, when he came this way,
Was heard (when looking on the sea) to say,
“ Thank heaven, we can at invaders smile,
Whilst on our little, right, tight, sea-girt isle ! ”
Dibdin's correct. Dame Nature has done much
For England's strength and beauty by her touch.

Here land and ocean and the azure sky
Seem (though in pleasant harmony) to vie ;
Surely our island (from the moon) must be
Like some rich gem set in a silver sea.

If any reader of my mazy flow
Has not enjoyed this pleasant ramble, go
At once ; for, take my word, you should not miss
The pleasure you 'll experience in this.
And, even now as we are strolling on,
We scarcely are aware how far we 've gone ;
For here is Babbicombe, a rising place,
Upon whose rocks can friend Pengelly tracce
When feet pre-Adamite had trod this way,
And makes ten thousand years as but a day.
And quiet Marychurch, with villas bright,
Presents a picturesque and pleasant sight ;
Indeed, there 's not just here an inch of ground
Where something worthy notice is not found.
And now we come upon famed Anstey's Cove,
Which looks as if the god of thunder, Jove,
Had, in a towering passion, madly hurled
One of his thunder-bolts upon the world,
Which fell just here, and split the rock in two,
Leaving the lovely chasm which we view.
Here is the spot, indeed, for pleasant rambles,
For soft flirtations, and for rocky scrambles.

Descending mazy winding paths, we reach
A most delightful creek and charming beach,
O'er which the sparkling breakers from the sea
Come dancing on in buoyant ecstasy,
Making the marble fragments on the strand
Shine as if polished by some fairy hand—
A place where Neptune well might hold his court,
And bashful mermaids demi-nude disport.
'Tis so sequestered, cosy, and retired,
A poet here must feel himself inspired.
Pardon the joke, but what romantic Miss
Could other than admire a *cove* like this?
But oh, support me, what is this I see?
Can I believe my eyes? It cannot be.
A rival poet here! Can it be true?
Yes, and by all that's vile, a "Thomas" too.
Here's his production, placed, for all to read,
Upon a board. To copy I proceed:—

"All pleasure-seekers who would rove,
Must come and stay at Anstey's Cove;
For pleasure-boats are all at hand,
And boil tea-water on the strand.
His boats are always neat and trim;
He also teaches young ladies to swim."

Shades of my now departed great conceit,
I never thought in Europe I should meet

Another Thomas who could doggerel write,
So I resolved to call him out to fight.
“Th’ usurper shall not live,” I madly said.
“A rival, and a Thomas—oh, my head !”
I hurried down, I felt a taste for blood !
But slipped my foot, and got a taste of mud.
Ah ! there he is, I see, without his coat,
Tarring the bottom of a pleasure-boat.
“Is your name Thomas ?” “Certainly,” said he.
“What poet wrote on yonder board ?” “Why me.”
“Then die !” To say this, I’d a great desire,
But saw his tar-brush and a blazing fire ;
Besides, he weighed at least a dozen score,
And so I thought I’d better say no more.
But I resolved to come out after supper,
Rub out my name, and write up “Martin Tupper.”
Then some, no doubt, will call the stanza fine ;
But I don’t care, so long as ’tisn’t mine.
The thing will come to Tupper’s ears, no doubt,
And ’tis for him to come and fight it out.
I’m off, and “he who *writes* and runs away,”
Of course, “will live to *write* another day.”





BISHOPSTOWE AND KENT'S CAVERN.

GOME, Mr. Thomas, what are you about?
Have you at last, then, run your journey out?
Nearly a month, and not a word to say?
If not spun out, what means this long delay?"
These are the sounds which ring upon mine ear,
Morn, noon, and night, and very much I fear
'Tis not in fancy only they are heard.
About the journey I've so long deferred,
I'll tell the secret if you've no objection.
Well, then, my friends, 'twas Exeter election,
Which gave "yours truly" something more to do
Than skipping gaily round the coast with you.
Besides, there's lots of time to ramble o'er
Devonia's beauty spots ere Eighty-four.
Thus much, by way of introduction. So,
With your kind approbation on we'll go,

But not before I wish, with all my heart,
The season's compliments. And now we'll start.

If you remember, when we parted last
From Anstey's Cove we all were running fast ;
That is, departed in a hurried way,
And of the cause I wish no more to say.
But, surely, you 'll admit 'twas very hard
That I should meet another doggerel bard
Just at the very time I thought I 'd found
For my Pegasus a new trotting-ground.
But that is past, and now we 'll onward go
Towards Torquay by way of Bishopstowe :
A snug retreat, almost a princely one,
Whose towers are glistening in the autumn sun.
'Twas here Old Exon's Bishop calmly passed
His latter days, and here he breathed his last ;
But even here, with everything serene,
His life much like the sea below had been.
Sometimes a gentle ripple crossed his face,
And very oft that ripple would give place
To such a tempest as would nearly shake
The diocese, and make his clergy quake.
Here the pugnacious prelate, so they say,
Had done much legal business in his day ;
In fact, 'tis said, he 'd such a taste for law
That in an instant he 'd detect a flaw,

And *Nisi Prius* lost a son of fame
When Exon's Bishop Henry became.
Methinks I see the patriarch prelate now,
With lip compressed, and closely-wrinkled brow,
Contending that to fate he was a martyr,
When in a certain case he "caught a Tartar."
The "Cream of Tartars" too, that one he caught,
Who wrote him up, and bravely set at naught
The mighty influence some wielded then,
To crush the Western "giant of the pen."
And Henry Phillpotts, snugly sheltered here
From care and strife, a spiritual peer,
Enjoyed in peace and calm his latter days,
With nothing to disturb ; at least so says
His own biographer, who ought to know
How passed his life at lovely Bishopstowe.
I think, if Henry were alive just now,
He'd have his work cut out to 'scape a row ;
And Exon's Frederick, I'm inclined to think,
Will not much longer be content to wink
At all the ultra-Ritualistic work
Which he or someone else will have to burke.
But there's no need to trouble or to fear,
Though apathetic he may now appear,
We cannot think the liberal hand that hurled,
At bigots, "Education of the World,"
Could aught but take a firm, defiant line
'Gainst all who would plain doctrine undermine.

But modern musings for awhile we 'll end,
And into famed Kent's Cavern we 'll descend—
Whose walls fantastic glisten strangely bright.
Just as they gleamed ere Moses saw the light.
On no account, dear tourist, should you miss
A place so full of interest as this ;
The caves of stalactite, which clearly prove
That this round ball on which we live and move
Was rolling on through space at such a time
That no amount of figures can define.
Come, "theologic students," to this cave,
And, in your deep research, much time 't will save,
For Nature here unerringly displays
Her truthful teachings in a thousand ways.
But there 's no time to tarry longer here,
For I have kept you much too long, I fear,
Upon our journey. But at length we see
England's "Montpellier," genial Torquay.
And here spread out is such a varied feast,
That we 'll devote to it a page at least :
And there 's a legend also I 've to tell
Of old Torre Abbey. So, till then, farewell.





IN AND AROUND TORQUAY.



HO would have thought it, fifty years ago,
That that small fishing village, Torre, would
grow
To such a splendid town as we to-day
See smiling proudly on the noble bay !
It doubtless seems to some a little while,
When Torrites had to travel many a mile
To do their shopping, up to Totnes town,
The nearest market ; but its great renown
Had not at that time reached its famous height,
Nor had the mystic "Mum" beheld the light.
Of Totnes now no more I wish to say,
As I shall stumble o'er it on my way ;
So let us look around a little while
Upon this cosy inlet of our isle,
Where invalids recruit their failing powers ;
This sheltered nursery for drooping flowers ;

This earthly paradise of those who see
The bliss of life all centred in *ennui*.
Where is the humble fisherman's abode
Which stood where now we see the Abbey-road ?
The nets hung out to dry upon the land
We promenade to-day, and call the Strand ?
The rugged heights, whose sheltered nooks among
The white-winged sea birds built and reared their young,
Are now with stately villas dotted o'er,
Studding, as if with gems, the verdant shore,
Which from the bay, at eve, presents a sight
As from a page in the *Arabian Night* :
The charming terraces, the rides, the drives,
And mansions peeping like colossal hives,
With mimic battlements, and graceful towers
Above the labyrinth of shrubs and flowers.
For Torquay Nature has done very much.
Whilst man has given the artistic touch.
In fact, on every hand fresh proofs we meet
Of what a most desirable retreat
Torquay must be, to that thrice happy few
With nothing in particular to do.
On Daddy Hole, the tourist is repaid
For any little sacrifice he 's made
In walking up the hill, and he 'll admit
All *Besley's Guide Book* says concerning it.
The eye is gratified, turn any way,
The spread of ocean, and the charming bay,

With distant landscape, making up a scene
Which gives Torquay the title—"Devon's Queen."

Oh, restless Britons, who are not content
Unless ye gallop to the Continent,
And suffer martyrdom both night and day,
Just for the pleasure (when returned) to say,
The scenery (you scarcely saw) was fine,
And go in fits about the lovely Rhine !
Pray look around upon the land and sea,
And tell me if you think that there can be
A spot where varied beauties so combine,
To make what Ruskin would pronounce sublime.
Poets inspired have oft been heard to sing
A hundred lines upon some village stump ;
In gushing pathos, make the welkin ring,
With strains ecstatic on the parish pump.
Whilst some will soar away to Timbuctoo ;
Through continental odours love to roam,
Or rave of cloudless skies transparent blue,
Unconscious of the beauties nearer home.
Why spoil your pleasures in ascending hills
Enough to break the lungs instead of healing,
Or run away to foreign rippling rills,
And cheat yourself with false romantic feeling ?
There's little need, my dear romantic friend,
To search half o'er the Continent in quest

Of what you 'll find, if you 're inclined to spend
A day or two in this our lovely West.
Go, praise the Grecian Isles, all green and gold,
Or from the Righi watch the setting sun ;
But here, on Torquay heights, can we behold
These varied beauties blended into one.

There 's just a little drawback I can see
To all this excellence in dear Torquay—
The houses are so one above the other
That, should Old Cole desire to make a smother,
His upper neighbours, as is more than fair,
Come in, of course, for quite a double share ;
Or should Binks have a party, you may know
The sort of thing they 're cooking down below ;
Or should friend Toddy miss his way at night,
Down Busby's chimney he may take his flight.
But this is levity, and just like me,
If anything grotesque I chance to see ;
No matter what, or how sublime the point,
All sentiment at once gets out of joint.
“ ‘Tis but one step,” they say, “ from the sublime
To the ridiculous,” and in my rhyme
Behold that step.

But stop ! I 've filled my space,
And so must ask another week of grace.

Besides I hav'nt told my legend yet,
Which, if all's well, next issue you shall get.

About Torquay itself, I think I've said
In my past rambles plenty on that head ;
And those who have not read my running rhymes
Can find them in the *Devon Weekly Times*.

So let's be off at once, my friends. "But stay !

Where is your legend of the Abbey, pray?"

"Come, enter in, and view the ruin old,
Of which there's many a tale romantic told.

These fine old trees, this ivy-covered cell,
This ruined chapel, could their stories tell.

A cloister here, whose walls are written o'er
With strange devices, and upon the floor
A crest, well-nigh by time trod out, we see,
And on it cut the letters H and B."

"Why look you," said our guide, "upon that stone ?

"Ah ! generations, my good sir, have flown

Since Hugh de Bruière gave the Church these lands
To ease his weary heart and cleanse his hands.

"Tis worth the telling ; would you like to hear
The history of those letters written there ?

Then, as the shades of evening gather round,
And sighing breezes mingle with the sound
Of wavelets breaking gently on the shore,
I will recite the Abbey legend o'er."

De Bruière's Revenge.

A LEGEND OF TORRE ABBEY.

The news came over from Palestine,
That many a brave young knight
Had spilt his blood on Ascalon's plain,
And fallen in the fight.
It told how Cœur de Lion fought
With Saladin the foe ;
And how he smote the Saracens
With many a deadly blow ;
And Richard's loud appeal for aid
Was echoed through the land,
Till brave hearts panted with desire
To join the knightly band,
And crush the "haughty infidel,"
Whose "vile, accursed race
Had dared deny us pilgrimage
To that most holy place."
Fond mothers bade their sons prepare
To join their warrior king ;
Fair maidens bade their lovers go.
And make all Europe ring
With their undaunted bravery
Upon the battle-field ;

Whilst fathers blessed their sons, and cried,
“ Better to die than yield.”
The flower of many a noble house,
With willing heart and brave,
Beneath the waving “ cross of red,”
Went eastward to his grave.
..

De Bruière sought his lady love,
The pride of Ilsham’s line ;
“ In life or death,” he calmly said,
“ Sweet Hester, I am thine.”
“ What mean those words !” the lady cried,
“ My lord, why look so pale ?”
He gently kissed her brow, and said,
“ To-morrow we set sail.”
She threw her arms about his neck,
He tenderly caressed
The maiden’s slender form, as she
Still wept upon his breast :
“ Oh, leave me not, so soon,” she cried ;
“ At least, another day !”
“ Ah ! tempt me not,” De Bruière replied,
“ Wouldst thou have me delay
Our lion-hearted king’s commands ?
And wouldst thou have me show
Less courage than De Pomeroy ?”
She slowly answered, “ Go !

Thou wouldst indeed unworthy be,
And I of thy true love.

Oh, may the angels kindly guard
And watch thee from above !”

The moon upon the noble bay
Shed forth a silvery light,
The lovers stood upon the beach
And watched the ripples bright ;
She vowed no power but death should rend
The sacred love she bore.

“ “Twill cheer my heart,” De Bruière said.
“ When on that distant shore,
To know that thou, my worldly joy,
Wilt to the Virgin kneel,
And ask that she may intercede
For thy De Bruière’s weal.”

She took a jasper rosary,
And hung it on his breast ;
He on her finger placed a ring,
With the De Bruière crest.
“ My father gave my mother this,
Which now I give to thee ;
And let it, as it was with them,
A sacred plighting be.”

The cliffs of dear old Albion
Had faded from the sight
Of that brave band, who longed to join
King Richard in the fight.

The Courtenays, the De Pomeroy.

And Totness, each had sent
A scion to the holy wars,
When Hugh de Bruière went.

The Lady Hester sighed and sung,
And mourned her lonely state ;
A weary year had passed, and yet
No tidings of his fate.

At length De Pomeroy returned,
The fatal news he spread,
That "Lion Heart" a captive was.
And Hugh de Bruière dead.

De Pomeroy sought the lady fair,
Told how "her brave young knight,"
Among the band of Devon's sons,
Fell foremost in the fight.

He told her how the coward foe
Had smote him as he fell—
She bade him oft, with tearful eyes,
The fatal story tell.

She mourned her knight, as lady should ;
But Pomeroy was there,
He'd loved her long in secret, and
She listened to his prayer.

For scarce a year had passed away,
When Ilsham's joy and pride
Was greeted by De Pomeroy
As his affianced bride.
And yet he knew De Bruière was
A captive with his king—
But he knew not his wedding bells
A fatal peal would ring !

The morn was bright and sunny,
Old Ilsham Grange looked gay.
And flags on Berry Pomeroy waved,
For 'twas a wedding day.
The waters sparkled in the sun,
And Nature lent her charms
To gild the arch of roses
Which bore the lovers' arms.
The bells of Mary and of Torre
Sent forth their peals of joy ;
De Pomeroy's cup of bliss that morn
To him had no alloy.
Old Ilsham's chapel altar blazed,
And nobles of the shire
Were gathered 'neath the sacred roof,
When Lady Hester's sire,
The blushing maiden in his hand,
Walked proudly up the aisle

(The way with fragrant flowers bestrewed).

And with paternal smile
He greeted Lord de Pomeroy :

“Sir Knight, thou’st bravely won
The richest jewel of our house—

I greet thee as my son !”
The robèd priests had raised the host,

And blessed the noble pair,
De Pomeroy led his lady forth,

She seemed surpassing fair.
And if the “bride on whom the sun

Shines out” is blest, then she
Was doubly blest—the golden light
Was shed on land and sea.

The firmament is thick with stars,

And noiseless ripples play
Around a ship from Germany,

Just anchored in the bay.
Strange phosphorescent light is seen
By watchers on the strand—
’Tis from the splash of oars—a boat
Is hastening to the land.

For Hugh de Bruière had returned,
His king once more was free.
He bade the boatmen ply their oars,
For, oh ! he longed to see

His love, and clasp her in his arms.
And tell his story o'er;
To press her fondly to his heart,
And leave her side no more.
'They neared the shore. De Bruière's heart
Leapt at the welcome sight.
But Ilsham Grange seemed from the bay
As in a blaze of light.
"What means all this? I never saw
The place so gaily decked,
And on the waters of the bay
A thousand lights reflect.
'They surely could not hear the news,
That we at length are free!
Oh, I had hoped my lady love
Had heard it first from me!"
He leaped upon the rugged shore:
A fisherman stood by.
"Good friend, the Grange seems gay to-night,
Canst tell the reason why?"
"In truth, I can. Do you not know,"
The fisherman replied,
"That Lady Hester has become
Young Lord de Pomeroy's bride?"
De Bruière felt a thrill of ice,
Yet showed he no surprise,
Though all the lights of Ilsham Grange
Seemed dancing fore his eyes.

"We mourned with her our brave young lord ;
But soon she gave her hand
To him who'd brought the fatal news
Home from the Holy Land."

'Twas then he saw the treachery,
For to De Pomeroy's care
A message he'd intrusted—
Could she be false as fair ?

Impossible ! " Pray tell me, friend,
If thou indeed art sure
The noble lady wed to-day
Is she who mourned De Bruière ? "

Unknown he learnt the story,
And knew she thought him dead.
He knelt upon the sand, and swore
Revenge upon his head.

• • • • •

Next day, at Castle Pomeroy,
Its lord could not be found.
The night came on, and through the wood
The torches glared around.
At length a peasant brought report
That, floating on the Dart,
They'd found the Lord de Pomeroy
With a dagger through his heart.
That night the ring De Bruière gave
Her who had mourned him dead

Was missing, and a rosary
Was hanging in its stead.
Not long had death to watch and wait
For one who longed to go
Where “weary spirits are at rest,”
And leave this vale below.
For many years beside the grave
Where Lady Hester lay,
A monk in prayer was often seen ;
But all have passed away.
There’s little left of Ilsham Grange,
’Tis gone—as all things must—
The Abbey Hugh de Bruière built
Has crumbled into dust.
Yet, as we stand amid the wreck,
The sunbeams glancing through,
We sigh at Lady Hester’s fate,
And wonder—if ’twas true !





ROUND THE BOX TO PAIGNTON.



Y legend's finished. Did I go too far
In the "grandiloquent" on love and war?
'Twas my intention to have written more,
But heaps of letters cried, "Give o'er! give
o'er!"

One neat epistle, to my great surprise,
Hinted my legend was "a pack of lies."
One writer, "Hob-nailed Boots," was pleased to say,
He'd greet me warmly if I'd come his way.
Another *billet-doux* said, "Mister T——,
We've got a hoss-pond that you ought to see,
It's got a legend that you ought to know:
Come down at once." I don't intend to go!
I think it only right, when there's a chance,
To lead my readers a romantic dance;
And hereabout materials are plenty
Enough, I'm sure, to manufacture twenty.

'Then, where's the harm, when there is such a field,
If I should to the "ruling passion" yield?
I'm not the only poet, goodness knows,
Who excavates his legends as he goes.
Think of what "Ingoldsby" in this could do—
And he a Church of England parson, too!
"Too sentimental!" Was it? P'rhaps you're right;
But don't attempt to check my fancy's flight,
For whilst I make romance and history blend,
And at the same time faithfully attend
To all the local points as we proceed
Along our pleasant way, there's little need
To stick at trifles, or be over nice—
What would most dishes be without the spice?
Yet, bear in mind, 'tis farthest from my wish
That I should cook, and so prepare my dish
To tickle palates only for the minute,
With nothing we may call substantial in it.
Rather than this at once I'd drop my pen,
And take—"Take what?" Why, take it up again.
Thank you, dear reader, your advice is kind,
So let's proceed.

And now we leave behind
The "modern Naples," which, across the bay,
Looks much as if the fays had passed that way,
And, seeing Nature had done well her part,
Added the graceful requisites of art;

So that the proverb, in which poets boast
That "Nature unadorned's adorned the most,"
In this fair region is not to the letter,
For Nature well adorned here looks the better.
The cliffs, as on we stroll, present a sight
That must the geologic mind delight.
In the "red sandstone" here a proof is seen,
Not of what might have, but what must have been.
Perhaps 'twas here great Newton rambled o'er,
Speaking of man with pebbles on the shore.
Yes, mid the strata countless years have piled,
Man is, as Newton said, "a wondering child."

We slowly ramble o'er the rugged beach,
Mid countless wave-worn fissures, till we reach
The town of Paignton, which to senses fine
Smells rather strong of—well, say "iodine."
Don't be afraid its flavour to inhale,
This fishy seaweed, though a little stale.
Fastidious invalids ! in fact, all who
Come to Torquay for health, a word with you :
Go round to Paignton twice a week at least,
Let your "olfactories" on the seaweed feast ;
Unpleasant p'rhaps at first, but sniff away,
And very soon you 'll be inclined to say,
No more with Frangipani you 'll anoint
Your snowy handkerchiefs ; and out of joint

Will be great Rimmell's nose, for you 'll declare
His perfumes are eclipsed by Paignton air.
If anyone will take this " sage " advice,
And thus regain what is beyond all price,
Pray don't forget the reckless scribbling elf,
Who ran the risk, and tried it on himself.
What 's that, dear reader, you are pleased to say ?
" No risk at all, or I 'd have run away ? "
Oh, thank you kindly, you are too polite—
Though, after all, I think perhaps you're right.

Come, let us for a moment glance around,
And see what beauty spots are to be found.
The little town some tracc doth still retain,
In places, of the Norman and the Dane :
The Church St. John, whose massive antique door
Suggests the time when " Orange Will " came o'er ;
The crumbling palace where the Bishops dwelt,
And where the good Miles Coverdale oft knelt
To pray " that all mankind might be at peace,"
And ask a blessing on his diocese,
With true humility his head would bow—
I wonder if the Bishops do it now !
Doubtless they do—these meek and lowly men,
Whose lives so imitate the One who, when
He trod this earth, went joyous on His way,
With something less than thirty pounds a day.

But things are altered now, and “things are dear,”
And I must drop that little subject now, for fear
Of bringing down the “clargey” on my toes,
And making Bishops long to pull my nose.

Some pleasant walks, and drives, and villas neat,
And well-stocked shops ; and here and there we meet
The bronzéd faces of old Neptune’s crew,
With very much the look of “well-to-do.”
Then, strolling down towards the bay, we see
Some signs of commerce on a well-built quay.
In all a busy place—need I say more ?
And now is just the time to view it o’er—
Rich in fine orchards, looking bright and gay,
Like Nature’s bride upon her wedding-day.
The birds are singing mid the blossom white ;
The sun’s decline reflects a golden light
Upon the dancing waters, as we say,
“ Paignton, adieu !” For we have now to pay
A visit to old Brixham, rich in lore,
So for the time I think I ’ll say no more.





IN AND AROUND BRIXHAM.



F all the seasons, Spring—the welcome Spring !
Don't be alarmed ! I'm not about to sing
Or write a dozen stanzas in its praise,
The thing's been done too many times and ways ;
There's not a rhymester who's not tried to turn
The handle of the great poetic churn ;
And, I'm afraid, should I attempt to cull
From Poesy's spring garden, I should "mull."
How can I hope to churn, by what I utter,
The milk that's been well skimmed to fresh spring butter.
Upon your patience I've presumed too much ;
In your forbearance there's a martyr's touch.
To follow me along and never tire,
'Twill all your strength and all your faith require.
As yet but one refuses to proceed—
Of his remarks I pray you take no need.
He had the taste—the bad taste—to infer
The road we take leads on to Exminster.

'That's not the reason why he's given out;
The secret is, poor man, he's got the gout;
So let's without him follow up our plan,
And leave him to get back as best he can.
For here is Brixham; and I've lots to say
About this spot ere we pursue our way.

To reach this famous town by land or sea,
The lynx-eyed tourist on his way will be
Pleased beyond measure at the glimpses rare
Of land and sea around him everywhere.
Let's take the higher ground. The sun shines bright,
And here the tourist gets a splendid sight;
At every step the landscape seems to change,
There's a fresh aspect in the distant range:
The spots we've seen before appear quite new,
Entirely transformed.

Yet another view—

Hope's Ness, Shag Rock, the Start, and Berry Head,
The hills across the bay—the eye is led
On and around, till one feels quite inspired
To turn a poet—but there's none required;
Too many poets are there in the field,
All jealous of each other—none will yield
The palm, and would most readily knock down
Him who would dare to claim the “laurel crown.”

'There's Tibbs the chemist, "I," and Billy Green,
And Jones the barber, who declares he's seen
Nothing in Shakspere that could venture near
His celebrated "Ode to Table Beer."

"Tis true there's Byron, Tennyson, Longfellow,
"Whose songs," says Quizby, "only fools should bellow;"
Whilst Bunk, the baker, twenty times has said,
"When 'Joipkins' dies the muses will be dead."
So poets by the gross are to be had.
No more! or we shall drive our readers mad.

Hail! Lords of Brixham! masters of the ground
On which the Prince of Orange safely found
A footing firm! do I now dedicate
These lines to you; and should it be my fate
That you approve nor wish to make protest,
Then shall your scribe indeed be doubly blest.

Perhaps, my readers, you are not aware,
That almost every fisherman's a share
In Brixham Manor, which their grandsires bought,
And it's as good a fish as e'er they caught;
'Twas in the reign, I think, of good Queen Anne,
The owner of the manor formed a plan
By which to raise the wind, and pay his debts,
I think he'd lost a lot on racing bets.

He pawned the manor to twelve fishermen,
And couldn't "raise" to take it out again ;
He sold the ticket to a dozen more,
Who subdivided with another score,
Until of "Brixham Quay lords" you may meet
Almost enough to fully man the fleet.

The town of Brixham, so Macaulay says,
Has played her part in history many ways ;
But time and space, I find, will not allow
Our party to proceed much further now.
And there's so much to say, I think it best
That till next week we'll take a little rest,
When, by your leave (I've got my jottings down),
We'll ramble o'er, and criticise the town.

I hope the "noble lords of Brixham" may
Not look on me as someone in the way,
Nor think that I with them have made too free,
And wish to dip me gratis in the sea.
I'm quite aware it's bathing time just now,
But I can't stand cold water anyhow.
No doubt they'd do it in a friendly way,
And 'twould be beneficial, I dare say ;
Yet, ne'ertheless, with thanks I should decline,
At least, until the weather's very fine.

The Brixham salts can tell you many a tale
About the “Spaniards” and that dreadful gale ;
And they can show the stone, the “werry same,”
Prince William stepped upon when first he came
On English soil, and—so the story goes—
He slipped his foot and almost broke his nose,
Although Macaulay doesn’t tell us that ;
Some say he only fell, and smashed his hat.
This as it may, one fact is pretty clear,
The Prince of Orange doubtless landed here.
And since that day, no Briton can deny,
They’ve landed larger fish and smaller fry ;
For Brixham’s now a noted fishing station,
And sends its finny produce through the nation.
The fish sometimes they send at night away
Is at the Lord Mayor’s banquet served next day.
Her Majesty herself’s had many a dish
(And quite enjoyed it too) of Brixham fish.
Some writer calls it—let us hope in fun—
“The Western Billingsgate,” and ’tis in one
Respect, because the Brixham lords have made
The place in fish transact the largest trade.

Some institutions good can Brixham boast,
As shall be found upon our wave-washed coast.
The Orphan Home, for bairns of those who sleep
Beneath the cruel billows of the deep.

Oh, sons of fortune, when your hearts are warm,
Think of the man who braves the fiercest storm,
And ne'er again beholds his blue-eyed boy,
That you may all the world's best fruits enjoy !
Brave and undaunted Plimsoll, unto you
The thanks of all humanity are due.
Already does your "voice of warning" save
Full many a seaman from a deep-sea grave.
Go on, and prosper in thy holy cause ;
If there is aught deserving man's applause,
And recognition of the Power Divine,
Assuredly, friend Plimsoll, it is thine.
Of architectural beauty there's not much
About the town on which we dare to touch.
It looks as if the builder, in a flurry
About some larger place, had in a hurry
Run up a makeshift town, until such day
As he could build it in a proper way.
It is, withal, a busy little place ;
Her sons of that true hardy English race ;
Of pretty daughters, too, we see a lot—
But where in this fair county are they not ?
Not Brixham only, but throughout the shire,
Do we behold what doth the gods inspire.
No wonder Orange William tripped and fell ;
Perhaps on landing some fair Brixham *belle*
Was on the beach, and caught the prince's eye,
And then he caught his toe—and there he *lie*.

He's not the only cautious, wise, discreet,
Who's prostrate fall'n at fair Devonia's feet,
And who on *terra firma* safely feels,
When Beauty turns his head and trips his heels.
Long may their grace excel, long may their smile
Light this fair county—"garden of our isle;"
And may we men live long so to admire
The lovely women of this "merrie shire."

• • • • •

"Thomas, wake up!" I started, looked around,
And, to my very great surprise, I found
Myself upon the still unfinished pier,
With two old lords of Brixham standing near,
Too near, in fact, for I heard one exclaim,
"All by hisself—poor devil—what a shame!"
"Get up, my man," said one, "or you'll be drowned!
Poor fellow's daft." I started up, and frowned.
You should have seen these "nobles" jump apace.
I looked indignant, and I left the place;
Went to the Queen's Hotel, and had some tea,
When presently a voice said, "There; that's he'"
And then I heard another fellow shout,
"They didn't ought to let such people out!"
"Twas all alike; the landlord thought me wild;
But, like Lord Hamlet, to myself I smiled.
He seemed too frightened to present the bill,
So I walked calmly off, and owe it still.



BERRY HEAD.



LAST week I told you of that strange mistake
The Brixham people were about to make,
In thinking that I had “*a tête malade* ;”
I certainly was vexed, but ’twas too bad.
The landlord soon recovered from his fright,
For long before I’d rambled out of sight
He sent the ostler and the boots to say,
“ For my refreshment I’d forgot to pay ! ”
I thought I’d better, and have no disputes,
Especially as both wore heavy boots,
So paid the money. As they went away
I heard that horrid boots distinctly say
Unto the ostler (who was rather deaf),
“ Ah, he’s a darned good deal more R than F ! ”
I thought that boots exceedingly low-bred,
But let him go—for here is Berry Head.

My predecessors in the tourist line
Pronounce the scenery here as “very fine ;”
’Twould puzzle them, mid such a grand display,
To speak of it in any other way.
From the bold headland, upon which we stand,
A view extremely charming we command—
The bay entire, its rocks and inlets lie,
As in a convex mirror ’fore the eye.
How tranquil seems the sparkling bay below,
Yet its associations shadows throw,
Which, as I close my eyes, resolve in form
To incidents historic, calm and storm.

Let us in fancy history’s steps retrace
To one bright morning in “a year of grace.”
Come, look with me, I’ll show you a strange sight ;
The waters of the bay are sparkling bright,
With countless craft its surface dotted o'er—
A “water fair ;” whilst all around the shore
Thousands of anxious gazers strain their eyes
To catch a glimpse of the “illustrious prize”
The *Bellerophon* as a captive brings ;
Whilst with the welcome news the country rings.
Yes, Bonaparte, “the terror of the world,”
Who from their power had kings and princes hurled,
Had bearded popes, had crushed and set up thrones,
And dotted Europe o'er with bleaching bones ;

This “god of France,” her idol, pride, and boast,
Now gazed on by a gaping, sneering host,
Who swarm around to get the faintest sight
Of him whose future seems as blackest night.
And now a murmur sounds from sea and land,
As a stout form with telescope in hand
Steps on the quarter deck to gaze around,
And list in wonder to the murmuring sound.
Ah ! who shall say what thoughts engrossed his mind—
Escaped from barren Elba ; but to find
Himself still deeper fallen. There he stands,
With saddened visage, as he clasps his hands
Behind him, just as he was wont to do
When from some eminence the fight he ’d view.
Behold the man, of whom, in bated breath
Princes would speak—the man whose frown was death.
Oh, warrior ! where is all thy greatness now ?
Where are the laurels that adorned thy brow ?
Does this vast multitude upon the waves
Seem like the forms of thy departed braves
Gath’ring around (as when the trump shall call)
But to upbraid and mock thee in thy fall ?
For what has been thy sword thrust to the hilt
Into defenceless breasts ? for what hast spilt
A sea of precious life-blood ? History’s story
Can answer fittest for thee—“Glory ! glory !”

The mariner who ploughs the trackless deep,
The Livingstones who far from loved ones sleep,
The sons of science, all who toil to find
Some lasting benefit for poor mankind—
Though less to mark their deeds on stone we see—
Are greater heroes than thou e'er canst be.
And was there nothing in thy abject fall,
To act as silent warning, or recall
Thy fatal steps to him who courted fame,
With little of thee in him but the name?
And this he used till, like thyself, he fell;
He knew not Cæsar, though he wrote him well.
How strange in exile and misfortune's day,
That both should look upon this lovely bay;
Was it the troubled spirit of the first,
Still lingering where his heart once well-nigh burst,
That drew the fated nephew to the spot,
That they together might bewail their lot?
When I beheld the fallen Louis last,
Returning salutations as he passed,
I thought, as at my side he took a seat,
How changed since when I happened once to meet
By chance the Emperor with map and chart.
Ambitions peaceful only filled his heart;
His soul's desire that Paris should be seen,
Of all the gorgeous capitals—the Queen.
And better far had he still gone that way,
With no desire a larger game to play—

A game which brought him to King William's feet ;
And left him resting on a Torquay seat,
Looking more like a genial country squire,
Than he who had baptized his son in fire ;
But let us drop the curtain. Who can tell ?
He might have wished to serve his country well.
Let's not forget, this is no easy task,
When in the smiles of France men cease to bask—
A people volatile, impulsive, vain,
Who when successful gloried in his reign,
And cheered him to destruction till he fell ;
Then they'd consign him to the seventh hell.
Ah ! La Belle France, how oft caprice demands
A hero or a victim at thy hands.

But I must ope my eyes—the sun has set,
• And we have scarcely looked around as yet ;
Then pray excuse me till next week's impression,
When from the subject we'll have no digression.
I'm glad, dear readers, you approve my plan
To make our tour as chatty as I can—
In homely language, to be understood
By all who care to read my lines ; nor would
I other than pursue our pleasant way,
With no attempts at rhetoric display,
Which often mars the even, easy flow,
And sacrifices sense for wordy show.

The language of some poets is so grand,
That only they themselves can understand
The depth of eloquence and thought profound :
Each sentence breathes a spell, which twines around
The hapless reader till he cannot sit,
And has to take a walk to save a fit.
The only fits I hope to send you in
Are fits of laughter. And I trust to win,
Before I end these “ pictures,” many a smile,
Yet keep reality in view the while.

From Berry Head the tourist can select
A half-a-dozen places to inspect,
But, as we come upon them in our way,
We’ll go straight on, and thus prevent delay.
The tourist lots of noted spots can see
About this “ very fine ” locality,—
The old bone caves adjoining Windmill Hill,
And traces of the “ Roman Conquest ” still
Are found. Encampments of a later date
Speak of the time which settled “ Boney’s ” fate—
I mean, of course, our last “ set to ” with France,
When “ Boney ” led all Europe such a dance.
At that time, and in time of previous wars,
This headland housed a thousand sons of Mars.

So many little trips about this part—
The ancient family seats, the river Dart,
Of which, of course, in good time we shall speak,
The mystic Laywell spring, the Smugglers' Creek,
'Bout which a story's told, and they declare
" 'Tis perfect fact," though none of them are there.
So, as we're strolling on to Dartmouth town,
I'll tell the story as I took it down
From a grandson of him whom 'tis about.
As for the truth—well, you must find that out.
I've searched the county records, but no trace
Is found there of its having taken place.
By the historian it has been forgotten,
And I believe not even Mr. Cotton—
To whose research Devonia's thanks are due
For facts which, till he spoke, she never knew—
Not even he, I think, the story knows.
And this alone, in my opinion, shows
That of the truth there's reason grave to doubt,
So I shan't ask him—lest he'd kick me out,
But tell the story simply as I heard
(In prose) from Elliott's grandson, word for word.
I've turned it into rhyme, because it's best,
And gives imagination time to rest.
Yet, pray, don't think I wish to tell a crammer;
I'm not addicted, sirs, to sling the hammer.
Oh, you may look amazed, and laugh away,
I'll tell the story, spite of what you say;

"Tis no encouragement to rack one's brains,
Then get one's statement doubted for one's pains.

Spirit of Chatterton!—who wrote a lot
Of poems, and poked them in the coffee-pot
To give them the appearances of age,
And get a lot of money for each page,
So they for "Rowley Poems" fairly passed;
But, poor young man, they found him out at last,
Which got the genius into such disgrace
That he resolved to quit his native place,
And go to London, and there try his hand
At writing lines for Roberts, in the Strand,
Who paid the youth so well for each production
That he, poor wretch, committed self-destruction——
I say, oh, shade of Chatterton! look down,
And cheer me on amid the critic's frown.
The look of real old age my paper's got—
I swear I haven't used the coffee-pot.

How Bob Elliott was Buried.

Old Smuggler Bob
Had done many a job
In running across the bay,
With a cargo of stuff,
For Bob wasn't a muff,
And did things in a business way.

He'd a very small crew,
But Bob Elliott knew
They were stars of the very first water.
His skiff was his pride,
Like a phantom she'd glide,
No Custom-house crew ever caught her.

And many a ruse,
But all of no use,
His Majesty's men had tried ;
For old Bob was too deep,
And managed to keep,
By stratagem, on the right side.

The crew of the smack
Were Slippery Jack,
Bob Dugdale, and Aaron Trier ;
There were Fogwell and Shears,
Green, Lakeman, and Myers,
In fact, all bold men could require.

But Bob had the gout,
So couldn't get out
When a cargo of stingo was due,
And for many a week
Had Sinugglers' Creek
Been watched by a vigilant crew.

For the weather was clear,
And to come too near
Was a risky thing to do,
As now and again
The coastguard men
Their glasses were scanning through.

But good luck seemed to aid
The rogues, so it made
The night as black as a coal ;
And ere the morn broke
They had managed to poke
The haul in a secret hole.

Which is said to have led
From Berry Head
To a spot in Brixham town ;
Called the Old Laywell,
Which rose and fell
As the tide went up and down.

Yet they felt in a fix,
For they 'd still got six
Small four-gallon kegs to stow ;
But 't would take no more,
And the mate he swore
In a way only smugglers know.

No time for delay,
So they scampered away
With the kegs to Captain Bob,
Who gave them a prayer
For bringing it there,
And promised each “one for his nob.”

“Here am I with the gout,
And can’t get out;
Oh! what with these kegs shall we do?
They’ll be here without doubt,
And bowl us out.
So it’s all up with I and you.”

“I’m on the tack,”
Says Slippery Jack;
“We must give out that you’re gone dead.
You can sit in a chair
Like your grandmother there,
And we’ll stow all the stuff in the bed.”

The bright sun rose,
And a coastman’s nose
Was sniffing the morning air;
And he knowingly said,
With a twitch of the head,
“There’s a cargo *bin* landed, I’ll swear.

Bob Elliott, no doubt,
But we 'll find it out."

So they made for the smuggler's door,
And although 'twasn't kind,
Were delighted to find
That troublesome Bob was "no more."

Then the Commodore said,
"Respect for the dead
Restraints us from searching the den ;
But we 'll keep it in sight
By day and by night,
'Till they 've buried the duffer—and then?"

• • • • •

There was no other chance
But to lead them a dance,
So a coffin of monstrous size
Was made, and good need,
For Bob was no reed,
Yet the box caused a little surprise.

"Twas a mournful day
When they bore him away—
Not he in his grandmother's clothes ;
"Twas his *spirit* they bore,
Whilst to keep from a roar
In a kerchief Bob buried his nose.

The crew of the *Bess*
Seemed in deep distress,
As each marched, with a handkerchief white,
To the burial-place,
Quite hid up his face,
'Twas a serio-comical sight.

The men of Excise
Even piped their eyes,
For they looked on Bob as a "brick;"
But little they knew,
As they searched the house through,
How cleverly Bob did the trick.

.
That very same night
A terrible sight
Was beheld, by coastguards three,
On the Totnes road,
With a phantom load,
They could solemnly swear 'twas he.

And each declared
Bob Elliott glared
Like one whom they'd rather not name.
Whilst the nag cocked his tail
Like a harpooned whale,
And snorted a crimson flame.

But Commodore Green
Was a man who had seen
A bit of the world, and so
He made up his mind
For himself to find
If the thing was manœuvred or no.

Next night to Bob's house
He crept like a mouse,
And listened outside the door,
When he heard Bob say,
“Then they all ran away,”
Which set the whole crew in a roar.

“Oh,” said Commodore Green,
“Then done we've been,”
As he poked his head inside,
Which scared 'em at first—
Then a louder burst,
For it wasn't to be denied.

The Commodore saw
'Twas no use to be “raw,”
So he called them “a d—— bad lot,
Past mending, I fear ;
But whilst I'm here
I may as well have some—and hot.”

Next morning they knew
At the rendezvous
How cleverly they'd been done.
He was named for that job
“Resurrection Bob,”
And he handed it down to his son.





DARTMOUTH.



OW, tourist, up again ; I've done my best,
By spinning yarns, to give your legs a rest.
The air is breezy, and the sky is clear,
And very soon will Dartmouth town appear.
This charming slope, o'er which we're passing now,
Is called Kingswear, and clustered round its brow
Are many dwellings, whilst the slopes are graced
With handsome villas, built with varied taste.
Ah ! here is Dartmouth, looking quite sedate,
Although 't has had a breeze or two of late
On points ecclesiastic ; and they say
The Rits' performance here beats any play ;
And as for candles, one would think the place
Was used as means of *grease* instead of *grace*,
And things substantial wrapped in clouds of vapour,
And *light* that should be *broad* extremely *taper*.
Yet we must pray for our be-lighted friends ;
They mean no harm, and often make amends

For much that's silly by the goodly work,
Which, at the risk of life, they never shirk.
Sisters of Charity ! a grateful nation
Well understands and feels its obligation ;
But tell me, "dearest sister," tell me why
You look so sad and make up such a guy ?
That cloak and hood destroys your every grace,
And spoils the natural beauty of your face.
'Tis possible an angel's work to do,
And be a saint, and have a husband too.
Heaven forbid that all the ladies should
Take in their heads to be so precious good,
And to the sterner sex no mercy show !
'Twould be the downright death of me, I know,
Or in a cowl and hood my head I'd smother,
Then shave my pate, and go in as a "brother."
Methinks I hear you say, "The fates keep from us
Such an infliction as 'the good Saint Thomas.'"

In English history Dartmouth takes a stand
Of some importance in our western land ;
E'en now the old defences do recall
When glistening weapons swarmed each castle wall,
When Plymouth joined with Dartmouth to repel
The French invaders, whom they thrashed so well ;
Or when the bold Crusaders swarmed the place,
Ere they set out upon their cut-throat race,

When he who spilt most blood in the blest fight
Came home bespattered o'er, a "red cross knight."
And here's the old *Britannia* training-ship,
Which doubtless in her days had many a trip
On errands to our foes by no means pleasant,
And left behind some most unwelcome present.
From Dartmouth harbour to the Russian war
Went some of England's braves to fight the Czar.
Not he who came to us the other day,
And seemed uncommon glad to get away.
Was it because, since he the serfs has freed,
Of servile toadies he's but little need?
Who rave and shout, and bow and scrape and cringe,
And go upon all fours to kiss the fringe
Of any mantle, if it Royal be,
Or toe that hoist them into dignity.
Oh, 'twas a sorry sight when Britons (crazed)
Went mad about the Shah, and hats were raised,
And ringing cheers were echoed through the land.
And noble ladies fought to kiss the hand
Of him who (diamond-daubed from head to heel)
For starving Persia could no pity feel.
When direful famine stalked his country wide,
With thousands perishing on every side!
The Prince, who lavished presents, would not give
One jewel from his hat that they might live;
But calmly held high council to decide
The quickest mode to stop the famine's tide.

And 'twas proposed (but fear restrained the hand)
To stamp the famine-stricken from the land.
This was the potentate who made us shout,
And shoddy lords went raving mad about.

Oh, Beelzebub the First, now is your day,
Announce a splendid coming, and your way
Shall with triumphal arches be arrayed,
And all our country's wealth shall be displayed !
Our Aldermen shall fêté thee, and our Mayors
Shall read to thee addresses, humble prayers,
In which thy deeds shall lavishly be praised,
In hopes, of course, that some of us be raised
To knightly seats for feasting thee so well ;
And nothing but thy photograph shall sell.
At a grand ball thou shalt lead off the set,
And with a duchess dance a minuet ;
We 'll in thy honour wear thy favourite hue,
Discard magenta for a brimstone blue.
At banquets *devilled kidneys* shall prevail,
And our dress coats shall have a deal more *tail* ;
Our ladies shall in *coils* their hair entwine,
And *serpent* necklets wear of chaste design.
This question shall be asked by errand lads,
And sung in music-halls by jolly cads.
From mouth to mouth be bandied sharp and thick,
Not "Seen the Shah?" But "Have you seen old Nick?"

Dan Godfrey shall no other music play
 Than choice selections from “Orpheus” *en fuit*,
 Our swells in club-foot boots shall bravely scoff-all-ease,
 To limp the parks “Le Mephistopheles.”
 In fact, we’ll honour thee in such a way
 That thou ’lt inclined be to prolong thy stay ;
 If so, be careful, sire, or, sure as fate,
 You ’ll go back minus half your jewels and plate.

But, oh ! good gracious me, I ’ve bolted quite
 From where we started—’tis a fancy’s flight :
 The flight we now must take shall be more real.
 This lovely river makes a fellow feel
 Inclined to take a header ; what d’ye say ?
 But duty says, “Come on ; we cannot stay.”
 ’Twas here Newcomin, who invented steam,
 First saw the light, ere Watt began to dream
 Of plans gigantic we behold to-day,
 And leaves his grandest schemes as children’s play.
 A stroll around the town for half-an-hour,
 A visit to the church and Gilman’s tower,
 You feel a pleasant longing to depart
 And mount “the English Rhine,” the lovely Dart.
 The boat is ready, and the wind is fair,
 The Cap’en with his man—an ancient pair.
 We’re bound for Totnes, but I ’ve filled my space,
 Which gives me just another week of grace.



A TRIP UP THE DART.

A WONDERFUL ECHO.



O wonder poets all delight to sing
In praise unmeasured of this grand old stream !
It puts Pegasus fairly on the wing,
And is indeed for bards a fitting theme.
No wonder tourists to the West are loud
In adulation of our English Rhine ;
Of such a river we might well be proud.
The pen to do it justice is not mine,
Yet will I add in this my humble lay
Another tribute to the many penned ;
So with the Cap'en's leave we 'll pull away,
And mark the noted spots as we ascend.

Having been up and down, I'd recommend
Which route is calculated most to please.

"Tis best to start from Totnes and descend,
Because the charm comes on you by degrees,
Growing and growing as on either side
Fresh beauties start at every stroke we take,
Or, gliding calmly with the flowing tide,
Bringing new pictures every point we make ;
So varied in its character the scene,
So truly lovely 'tis on either shore,
That tourists from all parts declare they 've seen
A wood, a creek, or slope like that before.
A Scot exclaims (just where the river 's wide,
As he takes in a pinch of black rappee)
" It so reminds me of my bonnie Clyde,"
Whilst " Jones-ap-Jones " his favourite stream can see.
Then there 's a spot which Captain MacO'Dowd,
Who 's on his tour (he 's married Miss O'Leary)
Points out to her, and bawls extremely loud—
" How like me fah-thur's place in County Carey,"
Yet all declare " the stream by far excels
From end to end the river of his part."
And truly we should have to travel far
To find a rival to the silvery Dart.

Starting from Dartmouth town the view is fine,
The waters sparkling, and the banks all green ;
The river runs some distance by the line,
From which Mount Boone's well wooded heights are seen.

We pass the celebrated Anchor Stone,
Which one would think meant safety in a storm ;
But 'tis an anchor, if not left alone,
Is *safe* and *sure* to bring your craft to harm.
Now, on our right, nestled among the trees,
Mid graceful shrubs, doth pleasant Greenway stand,
Birth-place of Gilbert, student of the seas,
Who opened up our trade with Newfoundland.
Then Dittisham, and rising far above
Stands Waddeton Court ; then Sandridge grounds appear,
Oh, such a place for poetry and love !
A busy trade could Cupid do just here.
And now the noble river narrows in,
Only to bring its charms a little nearer ;
Here hills and dales and woods and vales begin
To show their varied hues and beauties clearer.
This is Stoke Gabriel creek. Pray pause awhile,
And let your souls drink in the grand display
Which dear Dame Nature, as she seems to smile,
Presents us in her most romantic way.
The stillness now is broken by a splash,
And quivering in the air we see a fish
Between the heron's bill, who with a dash
Soars off to Sharpham with its dainty dish.
Ah, lovely Sharpham ! who indeed can speak
Of all thy beauties, and thy owner too,
And not be conscious that his power is weak
In all the justice he would like to do.

Oh, Heaven-born gift to those who do possess
 The power and will to succour in distress,
 Methinks more fragrance all the flowers give,
 Around the spot where generous owners live.

And there's an Echo somewhere near this place
 Which, if you bellow loudly "How d' you do?"
 Will answer back (they say) with polished grace.
 "I'm pretty well, I thank you, how are you?"
 My friends persuaded me to have a say,
 And as I didn't like to make a fuss.
 I thus began; but judge of my dismay
 When to my lovely lines it answered thus.

How beautiful, 'neath azure skies
 To write my tour and ruralize.

Echo: "Rural lies!"

How sad for those who have the gout,
 And in such weather can't get out.

Echo: "Get out!"

How mid such scenes my thoughts are raised;
 At my own power I feel amazed.

Echo: "Ah, mazed!"

"Tis grand to sip from Nature's cup,
 Nor be in crowded town shut up.

Echo: "Shut up!"

Oh, Echo! let no woodman mar
 Your sounds. I love you as you are.

Echo: "You ass! you are!"

This was enough ; all my companions roared
To see how quite struck comical I stood,
And no mistake, I felt completely floored,
But I believe some fellow in the wood
Sent back those answers, merely in a joke.
I 'm told such pranks just here they often play ;
But when an Echo calls a man a "moke,"
'Tis time, I think, to pack and clear away.

Now, let me upon tourists all prevail,
That ere the towers of Totnes Church appear,
They of a most enchanting sight avail
Themselves. At any price 'twould not be dear.
Just mount the hill, and take a calm survey
From famed "Wind-Whistle Cottage" towering high :
"A splendid spot" (so the star-gazers say)
"To view the planets, as they 're rushing by!"

But see, by yonder tower, our trip is o'er ;
'Tis Totnes Church, and very soon the town
Will be in sight, of which I shall say more ;
"But ere we part, old friends," said Cap'en Brown,
"I like to tell 'ee what occurred to me
On my last voyage 'pon the briny sea,
And how by cannibals I once was took
When sailing in the good ship *Captain Cook*."

The Bishop of Hungaraboo.

*STORY OF DARTMOUTH JACK, THE MATE OF THE
"CAPTAIN COOK."*

[IN THE SEYMOUR HOTEL.]

He winked his eye in a nautical way,
 As on the table his pipe he lay,
 Took a very long pull at a pewter can,
 Gave a jerk to his breeches, and thus began :

“ You ‘ve ‘eard of the salt wot used to tell
 How he was the crew of the *Nancy Bell*,
 Through being wrecked and cast away
 Without any grub, so every day
 They had to cast lots, and one after t’other
 Was eat, until only him and another
 Was left in the boat ; and they went ‘odd man.’
 Bill won the toss, so his story ran ;
 And often and often I ‘ve ‘eard him tell
 How he was the crew of the *Nancy Bell*.
 It’s a comical tale, and it mayn’t be true,
 But this here one I’m for telling to you
 Is as true as a *story* well can be,
 And I ought for to know, as it happened to me !

"At the time of the 'Ingen war,' I took
The berth of fust mate in the *Captain Cook*;
As smart a craft as ever set sail,
Or turned up her nose at a sou-west gale ;
I shouldn't a gone agin to sea,
But me and my missus us couldn't agree ;
I'd a peppery temper myself no doubt,
But she *was* a Tartar, out and out.
'Twas before the rail and the iron hoss,
I used to ferry the people across
From Dartmouth to Kingswear, and did werry well ;
But that's not the story I'm going to tell.
I sold the boat, and gave her the brass,
And says I, "Tis better we part, my lass ;"
She didn't believe me, I saw by her look,
But she knew it next day, for the *Captain Cook*
Left Dartmouth harbour that werry same night,
And long before morning was clean out of sight.

"We hadn't been long in the southern seas,
Before there sprung up summutter more than a breeze ;
We got in the breakers, and werry soon found,
That her bottom was dancing on werry rough ground.
And oh, Davey Jones, 'twasn't pleasure to see
A swarm of mad cannibals jumping in glee
At the prospect of having a bountiful spread,
And I wished myself back home, at Dartmouth, in bed.

They potted us all as we swam to the shore,
Then boarded the wreck with a terrible roar ;
Their skins was so black, and their teeth was so white,
And the grin on their mugs was a horrible sight.
They frizzled and bolted Jack Stark and Bill Green,
Then my turn came next for the spit, but the queen
Said, ‘Wompi-o-tompi-collossee-goboro,’
Which meant, ‘Let us put by this dish for to-morrow.’
But the king in the night drank three bottles of rum,
And the whole of his court got as tight as a drum,
They set up a yelling and fighting like mad,
And got treating Bouboske a little too bad.
For next morning I ’eard a most horrible wail,
They’d found the old buffer as dead as a nail.
In their anguish they hinted the best thing to do
Was to make up myself in a calabash stew,
A dish they prepare at their feastings of grief,
In which I was booked to do duty for beef.
”Tis made up in dough from the bread-fruit tree,
With a layer of gorilla and chimpanzee,
And young hippopotamus, cut in junks,
Then kangaroo’s noses and elephant’s trunks.
In fact, for variety it could vie
With that local production we call squab-pie ;
But just as ten niggers were lugging me out
Her majesty fetched ’em a whack on the snout,
And said something I afterwards found to be,
‘ Go, ’long, you black debbles, and leave him to me.’

'Twas enough ; for each cannibal cut for his life.
Then she said, 'Po-kee-boo,' which means, 'I'll be your wife.'
They carved my poor face, through my nose put a ring,
And mid beating of tom-toms proclaimed me their king.
I thought if my Betsy could pop in just now
The niggers might study a civilized row.
She'd have pulled all the wool off her majesty's pate,
And I'd have been roasted as certain as fate.

.
I soon learned the brogue, but my queen was a fright :
Her eyes rolled about, and her mouth was a sight.
We got on pretty well, though whenever a ship
Hove in sight I had no chance to give her the slip,
But, oh, to my horror, disgust, and dismay,
A slave brought the news to our wigwam one day
That Bug-a-boo-Tong was about to arrive,
To wage war on our village and skin me alive.
So my queen she explained that 't was proper and right,
The great king (that was me) should be first in the fight.
I didn't say much, but a thousand times o'er
I longed for my Betsy and Dartmouth once more.

I looked from the hut, saw a ship in full sail,
So I pitched up the queen a most plausible tale,
That with a ship's cannon what work we could do.
'Well,' she said, 'Go and fetch it ; but I must go too.'

I couldn't persuade her ; she'd made up her mind,
If I did run away, shouldn't leave her behind.
But she little expected, when hauled up that day
On the deck of the *Nipper*, the part she would play.
She raved, danced, and kicked, fought, bellowed, and
swore,

When she found I refused to return to the shore ;
So, rather than drown her, we brought her away,
And we landed at Plymouth on Michaelmas-day.
But when crossing the briny I hit on a plan,
So I bought from Old Wombwell a small caravan,
And followed behind 'em wherever they'd go,
And I made a good thing of my cannibal show ;
But somehow she fancied it wasn't all right,
And refused to perform on a werry full night.
I gave her the whip ; then she got in a rage,
Nearly scratched me to death, broke the bars of her
cage,

And the audience thought it was part of the fun,
Till she turned upon them, and oh, didn't they run !
She got out and played the old deuce in the fair,
She bit the policemen, and pummelled the mayor ;
The town was in arms, and 'twas getting too hot,
So I thought I'd best cut, and get rid of the lot.
I bolted to Dartmouth, and found my old gal,
She'd set up a mangle, was doing quite well ;
But I never informed her of where I had been,
Nor the part I had played when I married the queen.

I read in the papers they'd seized on the wan,
And werry particular wanted the man.

Then I heard of a meeting at Exeter Hall,
Where the Rev. Fluke made a helloquent call
On behalf of the natives of Bungaraboo ;
And to give them good proof that his story was true,
He showed 'em, mid cheer upon cheer, my old queen,
As one whom his efforts had worked to redeem.
Lord Shaftesbury was joyous, swore nothing would do
But Fluke as the bishop of Bungaraboo.
They gave a big tea, and collected a sum,
A cartload of books, and a barrel of rum.
He was only a week in his new diocese,
When he served for the natives a mouthful apiece ;
And although but a werry small portion each got,
'Tis supposed that he werry near poisoned the lot.
To Volker, the chemist, they sent a small bit,
And he found 'twas too *high*, as poor Fluke was a Rit.
What became of the queen there was nothing to show,
And I haven't the least inclination to know."

We listened to the Captain's strange romance,
Then paid him liberally, he said "Good-bye!"
But there was something in that captain's glance,
A sort of comic twinkle in his eye.

And well there might, for, to our great dismay,
We found till late he'd been a Dartmouth barber,
And gave it up because it wouldn't pay :
He'd never been a mile outside the harbour,
So said our waiter, and he grinned like mad
At what he called our " purchase of the packet."
I didn't show my rage at being had ;
But how I longed to warm that captain's jacket !





TOTNES AND NEIGHBOURHOOD.



SCARCE can trust myself to think or speak
Of that untruthful rascal who, last week,
So basely took my coin, then "took me in."
But why, dear readers, why should you all grin?
One writes to say "the sell" gave him delight;
Another says, "Ah, Thomas, serves you right!"
And one, on tinted paper, comes out bold;
He says 'tis nothing to the fibs I've told,
And even hints that tale was of my making.
I'd like to give that reader dear a shaking.

But, tourist, we have something else to do,
And I've a duty which I owe to you;
So let us roam at once o'er Totnes town,
Inspect each noted spot, and jot it down.
Ah, here's the "Seymour," that far-famed hotel,
Which Parliamentary aspirants know well.

Just cross the bridge, dear tourist, and we come
Upon the "Seven Stars," where "Mr. Mum,"
The mystic agent, by his wondrous power
Made voters change their minds in half-an-hour.
"Twas here the wealthy, brave, and sanguine Dent
Came down with well-filled purse, on victory bent ;
"Twas here poor Dawkins entered on the fight,
Which gave him heavy heart and pocket light ;
And Alfred Seymour wouldn't like to say
How much to Totnes he has had to pay
For the blest privilege to represent
"Ye town of Totnes" in "ye Parliament."
Then there was Pender, the great merchant prince,
They even made that man of money wince.
"Twas *my* intention to contest the town,
But couldn't get the Bank of England down ;
So, in the absence of this slight condition,
I missed the train, which caused me no contrition.
For Pender took the field, spent lots of brass,
But soon went home and wrote himself "an ass."

We all remember how, week after week,
The "Royal Commission" sat, and 'fore "the beak"
The needy voters quaked and shook with fear,
When cross-examined by the mighty Bere,
Who told the grave offenders he had come
To find out who and what was "Mr. Mum."

But months rolled on, and sixty pounds a day
(Or thereabouts) was squandered on this play,
'Till some outrageous wag conceived a plan
To make them think that Thomas was the man.
So I was summoned 'fore a crowded court,
Who thought unearthing "Mum" delightful sport.
The Chief Commissioner was in high glee,
To think the culprit had been traced to me—
The man, who was in Exeter a Rad,
Come here a Tory briber ; 't was too bad.
But, "O Jerusalem," let it not be told
Their looks when they discovered they'd been sold.
A caution 'twas, the Court was in a roar,
Bere slammed his book, and frowned—some say he swore ;
He even hinted I myself had been
The cause of showing them as "jolly green."
That as it may, the incident showed clearly
The borough for the farce was paying dearly.
But by the Chief Commissioner, they say,
'T is not forgotten to this very day.
I hope I am forgiven ; if 't is so,
I'll write an ode, my gratitude to show.
But I've been told 'twas once a serious matter
To say, "Friend Montague, pray, who's your hatter ?"

Poor Mr. Pender, how they worked his mine !
I offered to portray his woes in rhyme,

But his reply, I think, was most uncivil,
 “I want no doggerel, sir; go to the d——!”
 Of course I said I should do no such thing;
 I’ve writ my song, and I intend to sing,
 So here it is, and doubtless you will see
 That just “three flats” will be the proper key.

Totnes Election.

DENT.

I went down to Totnes with plenty of tin,
 And thought ’twas no difficult job to get in;
 But they skinned me entirely out of my heap,
 And my sole consolation’s to bear it and weep.

SEYMOUR.

Dawkins was *Dawkey*, what money he spent!
 A great *indent*-ation they made in poor Dent;
 Alfred is artful, he’s been here before,
 They’ve seen some of his cash, but they’ll never See(y)more.

PENDER.

I’ll go back to Manchester, and let them all see,
 How those independent electors served out me;
 Catch me down there again—never no more,
 If Rothschild was member they’d make him quite poor.

FIRST COMMISSIONER.

We 'll have a Commission, and find "Mr. Mum,"
And make him say what has become of that sum ;
We 'll bully poor vot̄rs for taking the brass,
But the rich ones, of course, we 'll touch lightly, or pass.

•

And so poor Totnes from the franchise fell—
Let 's hope without it she is doing well.
The little town has had to take her part
In bygone troubles, and she 's had to smart
For her transgression in the days of yore—
In Domesday Book you 'll find, if you explore.
The only building in the town of note
Is the old castle, with its ancient moat
Scarce visible, and there 's the stone, they say,
On which at marbles Brutus used to play.
But there 's a stone raised to the name of one
Who laid him down beneath Australia's sun,
And died upon that vast untrodden plain,
A martyr pioneer for human gain.
The name of Wills shall, in a future age,
Shine out more brightly on our history's page ;
And as Australia's mighty cities rise,
Her children, on the map, shall turn their eyes
To Totnes, in old England, and shall say,
" "Twas here he lived who died to mark our way."



FROM TOTNES.



ND so from Totnes town we now depart,
To find ourselves upon the higher Dart,
Which dances down all sparkling from the Moor,
Whose wild and rugged heights we shall explore.
From Totnes there are several roads to take,
Each very charming, quite enough to make
The tourist pleased and gratified to see
In this romantic, fine locality ;
By rail or road, or by the river, we
May reach Ashburton, Holne, and Buckfastleigh,
Through pretty Staverton, and do not lose
The chance of shaking hands with Parson Hughes,
Whose father was the friend of Thomas Moore.
See the fine church—he 'll gladly show you o'er—
And don't forget the justly-famed Holne Chase,
Where Nature dons her most enchanting grace,
Where poets, painters, Beauty's students roam,
And find some treasures rich to carry home,

Some pretty legends of this part, they say,
Are told by Carrington, and Mrs. Bray ;
And what they've done, they both have done so well
There's really very little left for me to tell,
They've used up all the legends, all the verse,
Which almost every native can rehearse,
And you, my readers, justly would condemn
If in the slightest shade I followed them.

But there's no fear, my friends, this scribbling elf
Knows how to carve his "crammers" for himself.
And as for legends I can truly say
I'll tell as big a—— tale as ever they ;
E'en Ingoldsby himself, though strange and wild,
Compared with mine you'll think he drew it mild,
And whilst you'll say at "crammers" he was clever,
Of me you'll cry in horror, "Well, I never!"
And as I promised many weeks ago
To tell my patient readers all I know
About that legend near the Lover's Leap,
And on my honour I've no wish to keep
The story from you, if it be your will
That I should tell it, 'tis about "the mill"
Which once upon a time stood on the banks
Near Buckfastleigh, where pixies played such pranks,
And used unseen a host of ills to shower
On all who dared to question pixy power.

*The Miller of Mingle Bridge;**OR, THE PRIEST AND THE PIXY.*

This legend (as legends do, you know,)
Goes back to a very long time ago,
When goblins, and witches, and pixies, they say,
Ruled the roast in a most disagreeable way ;
When the down of the thistle detected lies,
And cripples of ninety had evil eyes ;
When the peasants sat up on particular nights,
And waited the coming of curious sights ;
When a bit of stray cloud passing over the moon,
Foretold of a death in the family soon ;
When, as soon as the sun had gone in the west,
The pixies in clothing invisible dressed ;
Played the strangest of pranks with the farmers around,
When their orchards were blighted, their cattle were drowned ;
When the butter and milk if bewitched wouldn't keep,
And poor Giles through their horrible pranks couldn't sleep :
When they'd play hunt the slipper across his poor toes,
Or march in procession o'er Gosling's nose.
When the leg of a frog would charm away
The mumps or king's evil in less than a day,
And a baby if born with a mole on his cheek
Would sicken for measles in less than a week ;
And when maidens their swains to the altar could bring,
By going to sleep with a wedding ring.

The power of the pixies was awful and great,
And they kicked up their antics both early and late.
From sundown they lorded o'er layman and priest,
Till a streak of red sunlight appeared in the east ;
When, like mist across Yes Tor, they'd scamper away,
But to come out again at the close of the day.
'Twas when only one crystal stream used to flow
From the foot of Fur Tor to the valley below—
At the dawn of the morn 'twas a beautiful sight
To see the mad torrent all sparkling and bright,
First weeping, then creeping around where once stood
A forest of oaks in the Wistman's Wood,
Then carolling onwards, or ling'ring to play
Round a huge mass of granite which stood in the way ;
Still growing and growing in beauty and strength,
Attended by satellite streams, till at length
It danced, foamed, and bounded in giant-like glee :
Then stealthily gliding o'er Exworthy lea ;
Now gentle and childlike with prattle and song,
And gaining in strength as it babbles along ;
Then raging and rushing with angry roar,
Like a fiend in his wrath coming down from the Moor ;
And suddenly rising with treacherous sway,
As if savagely seeking for human prey—
As we're told, in the story of " River o' Dart,"
How " every year it claimeth a heart ;"
Now leaping, now creeping with scarcely a sound,
Now clearing a rugged cascade with a bound ;

Then tripping at Holne the bright pebbles among,
Making musical notes as it warbles along ;
Now clear as a crystal, now maddened with foam,
As if fleeting in haste to the ocean, its home;
Then gracefully gliding, majestic and free,
On, on, till it joins and is lost in the sea.

Well, 'twas just at this time, so the legend goes on,
That a miller, well known as old "Darlington John,"
Kept house near the foot of that dangerous steep,
Where the lovers are said to have taken a leap.
(But whether that story be romance or not,
It strangely resembles the usual lot
Of all lovers who stand and fidelity swear,
Then take a long leap into—goodness knows where.)
But John remained single, and set up a mill
On the banks of the Dart, and the tourist may still
Observe an old building, long gone to decay,
With a granite-built pit where the wheel used to play.
A curious fellow was John in his way,
A terrible sceptic, and many a day
With the Abbot of Buckland his views he'd defend,
Till the abbot's few hairs fairly stood upon end.
They were always good friends, for whenever the priest
Paid the miller a visit, they'd swallow at least
A dozen good glasses of "hot, sweet, and strong,"
And sometimes the miller would sing him a song

Of some beautiful maid, and he'd eagerly listen
Till his eyes—— (But no doubt 'twas the grog made them
glisten.)
And John would rail loudly 'gainst pixies and priests,
High mass with low diets, and passover feasts ;
In fact, the dogmaticals one and all found
No friend in the miller—he hit 'em all round.
The abbot, good soul, did his best to redeem
The sceptical miller, who sometimes would seem
To listen devoutly, as if in a fog,
Which was quickly dispelled in a tumbler of grog.

One morning the miller was busy at work,
When he felt at his elbow a terrible jerk ;
And looking around him, he saw standing by
A little old man, about twelve inches high.
“Good Morrow, my friend,” said the dwarf with a smile,
“I’m hungry and thirsty, and many a mile
I’ve walked o’er the moorlands to hear you sing
Of your unbelief in the ‘pixy ring.’
I’m told you sing it at break of day,
And declare you are right in what you say ;
But whether your knowledge be right or wrong,
I should very much like to hear the song.”
The miller felt flattered, and laughing said,
“Like the rest of the noodles, no doubt you’ve read
Of these goblins and pixies, and all their strange ways,
Till at length, like them all, you’re possessed of the craze.

But come you inside, little man, and rest,
Take a bite and a sup, and I'll do my best
To sing you the song which, I sadly fear,
Will never repay you in coming to hear."

"Don't talk to me of such wild things
As pixies, or of pixy rings ;
For no superstitious lout am I,
And that—ah ! ah !—is the reason why
The pixies I can never see,
For they never dare show themselves to me
So from morn till eve I'll gaily sing,
And laugh to scorn the pixie ring.

"Poor Hodge, when reeling home at eve,
In maudlin fear, would make believe
The pixies 'twas who did bewitch,
And cause his flounder in the ditch.
Though Farmer Mags may still declare,
He's seen 'em oft at Totnes fair ;
But, till convinced, I'll ever sing
And laugh to scorn the pixy ring."

He finished his song with a knowing wink.

"Bravo," said the dwarf ; "but, my friend, I think
A most unwelcome proof I could bring
Of a pixy power, and a pixy king."

"Indeed," said the miller, "I'd like to see
The man that could work such a change in me ;
'Twould be easier much for those pixy elves
To take the task upon themselves,
To prove my single life a dream,
Or to turn my wheel against the stream ;
Or to change the course of the river Dart ;
If they could do this, then with all my heart
I'd frankly admit that I was wrong,
And never more warble my sceptical song."

"'Tis well," said the dwarf, with a strange grimace,
As a light most unearthly lit up his face ;
"Your song and your singing are very good,
But, my sceptical miller, I think I could
Cause what you have mentioned to come to pass."
And a strange blue light lit up the glass
He held in his hand. "Now, I wish you good-day,"
Said the dwarf with a grin, as he toddled away..

"What a rum little chap," said the miller, and then
He went to the door to look at him again.
But the little wee cripple had gone out of sight,
And the subject forgotten almost by the night,
Till the abbot looked in, when the miller related
What the comical midget had prognosticated.
Then the abbot looked grave, as he mixed the grog stronger,
And stayed with the miller that night a bit longer ;

But whether the priest had forebodings or not,
He mixed up the liquors uncommonly hot,
And at parting they both were agreed on the folly
Of losing one chance in this world to be jolly.

The bright sun was shining o'er valley and hill,
And up with the lark were the men at the mill ;
But they looked at each other in wildest dismay,
When they saw the mill wheel running round the wrong way.
It shook the whole building ; the miller cried out
To the man in the mill, "What the devil be 'bout?"
And the man bellowed back in a terrible fright,
"I'll be darned if I know, but there's summut not right."
Then the miller looked out of the window to see
What on earth with his mill stream the matter could be,
When he saw the mill leat with huge boulders all crammed,
And the water to feed it completely dammed.
The wheel rushed round at a terrible rate,
The miller glared wildly, each hair on his pate
Stood up as he viewed it in wonder profound ;
To see without water the wheel rushing round !
With boulders the river was blocked, like the stream.
Then he thought of the dwarf, yet believed it a dream ;
But, oh, very quickly he saw what was done,
For the river itself was beginning to run
In another direction—a mile from the mill.
Yet the wheel the wrong way went on galloping still,

And so silently now, for the din and the roar
Of the river had gone, and the miller once more
Tried to speak, but tongue-tied, couldn't utter a word,
And yet all around him he fancied he heard
His sceptical song as if sung in the air.
He looked all about him, yet nothing was there ;
But he recognised then, in the words as they ran,
The voice and the laugh of the little old man :

“Your single life is not a dream,
But the wheel is turning against the stream.
Behold, the course of the river now,
And to the power of pixies bow !
Come, miller, come, let's hear you sing,
And laugh to scorn the pixie ring.”

The miller was scared to an awful extent,
And away for the Abbot of Buckland he sent,
Who came at once, and could quickly see
There was need for some prayers and a rosary.
“This comes,” said the abbot, “of unbelief ;
But if you repent you shall have relief.”
“On this condition,” said John, “I will,
Restore my stream, my wheel, my mill.”
“’Tis well,” said the abbot, “and you shall see ;”
So he sent for the monks of Buckfastleigh.
They surrounded the miller, the wheel, the leat,
And ev'ry ten minutes would words repeat,

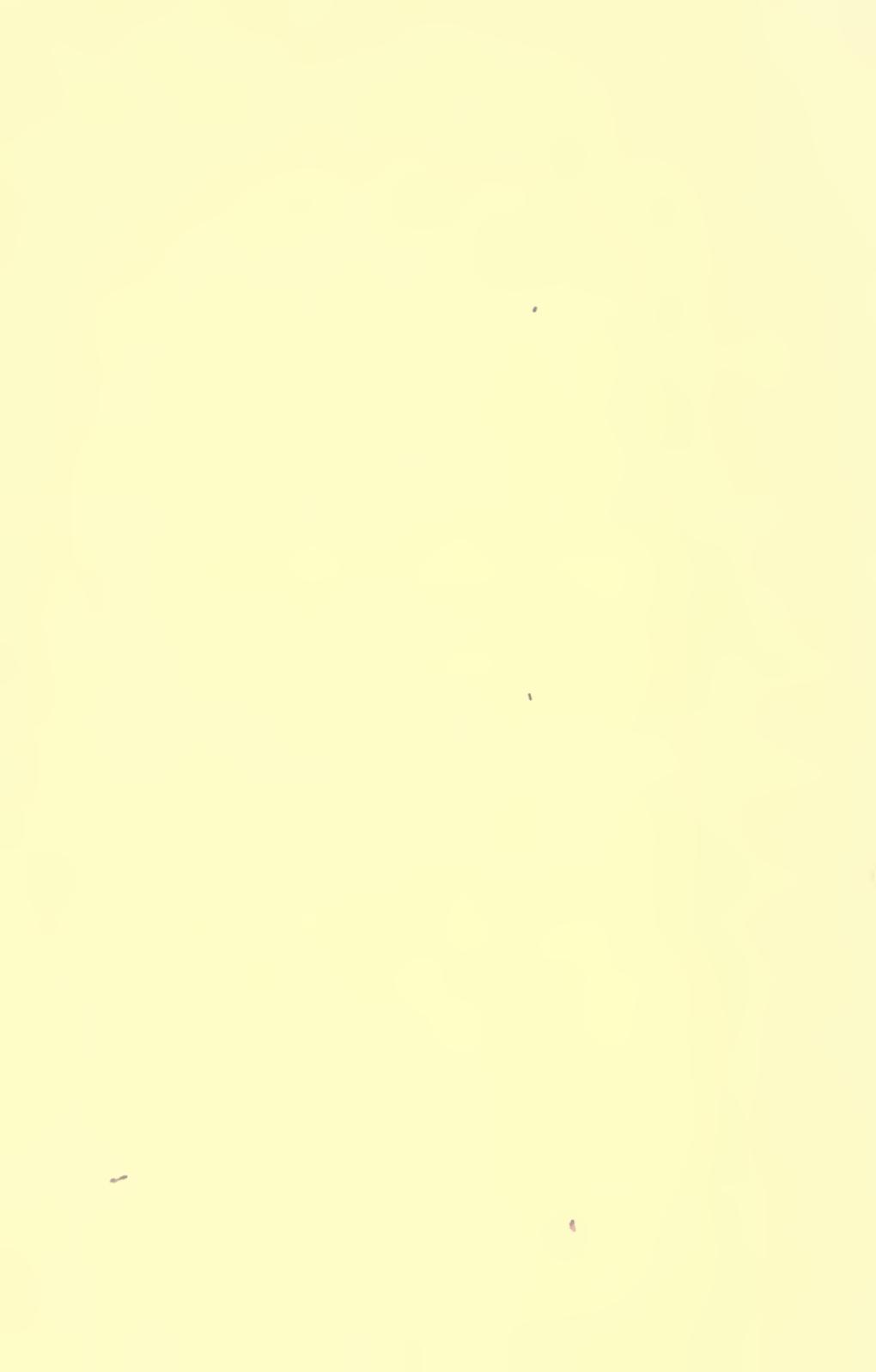
Which were said in those times to lay a ghost,
Or destroy the power of the pixy host.
They stayed with the miller throughout the night,
And at the first dawn of morning light
The stones were gone, and the stream ran bright,
The leat was full, and the wheel was right ;
They had put the pixy power to flight,
And the miller he capered in wild delight.
Then they all partook of his excellent cheer,
They finished his brandy, rum, whisky, and beer,
With hot water and lemons ; most certainly they
Did the "spirits" remove in a wonderful way.

But as soon as the sun had dipped his nose
Behind Buckland Beacon a storm arose,
And the boulders again went flying about,
Putting the abbot and monks to the rout.
The river was blocked, and the wheel began
To spin the wrong way, and every man
Went down with a flop on his marrow-bones,
But they had to get up, for the whizzing stones
Went flying around them, sufficient to scare
The devoutest of monks in the midst of a prayer.
So the contest 'tween pixies and priests raged hot,
But the pixies, alas ! soon the best of it got,
For the monks one and all, as they ran in despair,
Said they knew besides pixies the devil was there.

And oh, what a wreck of a place was now seen,
A pile of huge boulders where lately had been
The mill and the dwelling, beyond all repairing.
Yet the miller, bad man, began cursing and swearing,
And rapped out in so awfully awful a way,
That the abbot and monks without further delay
Scampered off to the Abbey, too scared and devout
To encounter the stones which were flying about
From invisible hands, and the abbot could show
For years on his nose the effects of a blow.
Next morning the miller, chop-fallen and sore,
Presented himself at the old Abbey door,
And begged for admission, declaring that he
Henceforth the most pious believer would be ;
Did penance, and each obligation he took.
Then the abbot, good man, made him baker and cook,
A post which he filled (in the records 'tis seen)
As if born to the faith and the berth he had been.

Still stands the old pit, but long gone to decay
Have the cottage and mill, and if passing that way,
The tourist can see how the course of the Dart
Was just at this place rudely riven apart,
Then joining below at a point which they say
Is known as Dart-meet unto this very day.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.





MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.



FATHER PETER'S SOIRÉE.

A STORY OF CHRISTMAS EVE, 1868,

IN WHICH THE STATUE OF FATHER PETER INVITES ALL THE FIGURES
IN FRONT OF THE EXETER CATHEDRAL TO AN EVENING PARTY.

SCENE : *Front of Exeter Cathedral.*

LD Christopher Tagg was a tailor by trade—
He worked for a shop in the city.
A very respectable living he made,
And he often declared 'twas a pity
If a man, after toiling from morning till night,
Couldn't manage at times to be jolly ;
And especially Christmas he thought it but right,
And to differ, he argued, was folly.

Now, a very good master had Christopher Tagg ;

He believed 'twas a shame and a sin too ;

So each Christmas he made it a practice to give

As much punch as his men could swig into.

Now, no wondrous prophet was needed to see—

Nor indeed was there room to suppose—

That Christopher never got fuddled on tea,

“As the red moon was up” on his nose.

So they drank to the health of the missus and master,

And the sons and the daughters, and prosperous trade,

Till old Christopher's head began running round faster

Than ever his needle the buttonholes made.

’Twas getting near one when the old chap departed,

Through the lane of St. Martin’s (he lived near the Close),

And on passing the front of St. Peter’s he started

To see a quaint figure sit rubbing his nose.

He looked at the front of the building, and wondered

To see vacant places where statues had been.

“Why I can’t understand—there was nearly a hundred,

And now only that rum-looking chap’s to be seen !”

Just then the old bell on the midnight air,

Boomed solemnly out : how old Christopher shook !

“Why ’twas filled up with figures this morning, I’ll swear ;

Now there’s none to be seen but just one in yon nook.”

He took out his kerchief and rubbed his old eyes.

“Well, if this isn’t strange may I never more stitch !”

When, to Christopher's horror and great surprise,
The figure he gazed at stepped down from the niche.
"Good gracious, I'm dreaming!" old Christopher cried;
"Or has Christopher Tagg been deprived of his sight?"
"Neither one nor the other," the figure replied;
"My companions are supping with Peter to-night,
They left about twelve; but I had my fears
About going myself, they've so crippled my points,
And sitting cross-legged for six hundred years
Makes a fellow, you'll own, rather stiff in the joints.
But if you would kindly just help me along,
You shall go to the party, so give us your hand,
And when we get there you shall sing us a song."
Poor old Christopher shook; he scarcely could stand.
"Keep up," said the statue, "you're surely not frightened,
In a second or two we shall be at the place."
At the sound of strange music his wonder was heightened,
And the cold perspiration ran over his face;
Then a massive old door was thrown open, and there
The strangest of sights met Christopher's gaze:
There was old "Father Peter," perched up in a chair,
And the statues sat posed in all manner of ways.
Old Peter cried, "Order! a stranger's among us,
Whoe'er he may be, or whatever his grade,
P'rhaps he writes for the papers, and comes here to wrong us."
"No! I'm Christopher Tagg, and a tailor by trade."
Then Peter smiled grimly, and shook up his keys,
And the figures around seemed quite awed at the bunch;

Then turning to Christopher, "Pray be at ease,
And I'll brew you some antediluvian punch.
Meanwhile, as 'tis Christmas, it cannot be wrong,
And we don't have a soirée here every day,
We'll get this old tailor to give us a song."
So poor Christopher struck up a comical lay.

"O dear ! I never thought,
When I left the shop to-night,
That I should be found on such queer ground,
And behold such a curious sight.
You're all so very cold,
And you're surely made of stone,
Yet you caper and dance
Like Roberts or Vance,
Or the nimblest flesh and bone ;
Your company gives me great delight,
But I'm bound to leave, so, friends, good night."

[*They all stop him.*

"Well done," said Father Peter. "Tailor Tagg, your health.
Now, stony-hearted brothers, let us show
This son of earth what we prize more than wealth—
Acquaintance with, six hundred years ago."

A statue, with one arm, one leg, one eye,
Said, "Doubtless, Tailor Tagg, you've oft seen me,

And wondered how I got in this condition.
I'll tell you, but it is a strange admission.
Well then, you must know that I fell in love
With the same girl as number twelve above ;
She worked for Mrs. Treadwin, and each day
She smiled so sweetly when she passed our way.
She couldn't have us both, 'twould not be right,
So we came down one day and had a fight.
Look at his head, 'twas I knocked off that piece,
And I'd have killed him but for the police ;
For miles around the people heard the blows ;
We couldn't break each other's hearts, we broke each
other's nose."

He Sings :

"No doubt you've beheld us in passing that way,
And wondered what caused this dejected display ;
Why our legs and our arms are so battered and bruised.
Well, I'll tell you the story, and you'll be amused :
Very oft in the winter, before we got old,
We'd run round the yard, just to keep out the cold,
And one or the other would often get tight
At the 'Globe' or the 'Clarence,' and stop out all night.
To keep in one posture year after year,
Would make stronger fellows uncommonly queer.
'Tis true we assisted, just now and again,
Young Exeter's game on the fifth of Novem. ;
And much like you mortals, when nothing to do,
We got up an argument and a set to ;

In the vale of St. David's we had a *mêlée*,
And that's how we're battered and bruised as you see,"

Chorus by Statues.

"And that's how we're battered and bruised as you see."

Then an old figure, battered, crumbled, broke,
Stood up, glanced all around, and thus he spoke :

"What sights have I beheld from my old place !
What horrid works been done before mine eyes !
The blood of martyrs sprinkled on my face !
I've heard their shrieks, ascending to the skies !
I've seen the fiends look on in hellish glee,
And pile the faggots up, and bless the Lord !
Oh, I have been compelled to stand and see
What should break human hearts, but mine is hard.
I've seen the blushing bride, all smiles and love,
Walk forth beneath my pedestal to die ;
I've heard the bridal peal, the funeral knell,
Before that day's bright sun had left the sky.
How little do the thoughtless, giddy throng,
Who pass us daily by, and rudely stare,
Think what we've been compelled to look upon ;
But let them pass away, we'll still be there."

"Stop, stop !" said Peter, "this dull theme is wrong,
Let's ask the tailor for another song."

Poor Christopher, he looked towards the door,
And would have bolted had there been a chance ;
But, oh, 'twas guarded well by three or four
Statues, who straight began to grin and dance,
And cut such capers that the poor old fellow
Had to comply. He thus began to bellow :

"If you 'll only let me out of this, as true as my name 's Tagg,
I 'll make you all dress coats around, and never charge a
mag ;

I 'll mend up all your breeches, and if you 're a button short
I 'll sew it on with pleasure, yes, I will with all my heart ;
You fine old English gentlemen, all of the olden time.

Chorus by Statues.

"We fine old English gentlemen, all of the olden time.

" You see, I want to get back soon ; I 've had enough of this,
There 's plenty of you here, and so, of course, you will not
miss

A wretched little tailor, who is only in the way,
And whose wife, if he 's not home soon, will think he 's gone
astray.

You fine old English gentlemen, pray let me go this time.

Chorus by Statues.

"We fine old English gentlemen, all of the olden time."

Then up spoke Father Peter, " On my word
I 'm sorry for your wife, and family too,

A better rendered song I never heard ;
'Tis quite impossible, we can't spare you.
Here, take another glass, don't be afraid,
'Tis the same sort King Alfred used to drink.
And sometimes for his Majesty I've made
A jorum, which compelled him oft to wink.

"There, that's the way ! Now, saints, keep order, please,
Or I'll chastise you with this bunch of keys."
This stopped the chatter. Peter bowed to each,
Winked at the tailor, and began his speech.

"How many years, with lantern, keys, and book,
Have I looked on the city from my nook !
The passers-by who glance up at my face
Would scarcely think that from that quiet place
I've watched the generations come and go,
Nor think how much of them and theirs I know.
I've seen poor fools puffed up by fortune's freak,
Forget their friend, and e'en refuse to speak
To poor relations as they passed along.
I've seen the struggling weak crushed by the strong.
I've seen men rise to affluence and power,
And all come tumbling down in one short hour.
I've seen poor, empty, brainless idiots sit
In judgment upon intellect, and spit

Their pointless satire on the wise and just,
And I have seen these idiots lick the dust.
I've often watched the steps of goodly men
Whose souls' desire was only answered when
They helped a fellow mortal ; and at last
I've wept the life departed as it passed.
I've seen the city all on joy intent ;
I've seen it all in solemn sorrow bent.
When I look round I find all things altered so,
The old Guildhall's the only face I know.
How changed is all since first I took my stand
Down to the day when, from my failing hand,
I dropped my book on a dissenter's nose !
'Twas quite an accident, but there are those
Who swear I threw it at him, from my perch,
Because he said he wouldn't go to church.

"And now, my tailor friend, a word with you :
In coming here you made a sad mistake ;
'Tis useless here for mercy now to sue,
You've made up all the clothes you 'll ever make.
The vacant niche in future you must fill ;
We 'll turn you into stone, and make you sainted ;
So choose your title; take whate'er you will."

The tailor bellowed "Murder" twice, and fainted.

At two o'clock a.m. on Christmas Day
The snow was falling gently in the Close,
When P.C. Jenkins, walking round that way,
Fancied he saw a pair of human toes
Peeping from out the old Cathedral door.
“ Is this the way your Christmas Day you keep ? ”
He said ; for there, stretched out upon the floor,
Was poor old Tagg, half frozen and asleep.
“ Don’t bellow ‘ Murder ’ here, or, by my staff,
Of Christmas dinner you shall not get much.”
“ Good, kind policeman, help me up ; don’t laugh,
For really I’m as stiff as any crutch.”

Poor Christopher got home at half-past three,
And ever since that day, when passing by
The old Cathedral, Tagg looks up to see
If they are all at home, but he fights shy
Of Father Peter, and he never told
His missus how he caught that shocking cold.





MISS JEFFERSON'S BABY.

A STORY OF CHRISTMAS EVE, 1781.



HY does my lady of Rougemont go,
On this terrible night, through the drifting snow,
To kneel at a humble grave in prayer,
Leaving a wreath of immortelles there?
Ah ! why, indeed ! for the night is chill,
And the snow-storm sweeps over David's Hill,
Piling the flakes on the tombstones high,
That the moon, as she fitfully peeps from the sky,
Seems to fill ev'ry part of that sacred ground
As with white-winged angels watching around.
But years, ere time had tinged her hair,
Each Christmas Eve had she been there ;
And sure as came round each Christmas Day,
The worshippers looked as they passed that way,
For they knew a fresh wreath would be placed, instead
Of the one that had crumbled, all withered and dead.

Come, Father James, we pray you tell
The story they say you know so well.

.
'Tis sixty years this very night ;
The air was as cold, and the roads as white,
The yule-logs crackled, and sent their glow
Through the casements bright to the dancing snow.
The welcome sounds of the Christmas waits
Were heard beyond the city gates.
I remember it well, though I was but a boy,
For I always looked forward with youthful joy
To Christmas-tide, when I dared to show
I knew the use of the mistletoe.
Real Christmas weather as used to be,
And a frost as now we but seldom see ;
Though they'd not believe 'twas Christmas at all
Unless the waits had given a call.
And we greeted the coming with great delight,
Of Christmas Eve and New Year's Night,
For Lord of the Manor, the Parson, or Squire,
Were never forgot by St. David's choir.
Two pounds apiece at least 'twas worth
Our singing "Good will and peace on earth ;"
Although at times, I am sorry to say,
It didn't wind up in a peaceable way.
But I'll to my story. We always met
At Jefferson's cottage, and Jeff would get

A jug of flip, sweet, strong, and warm,
Which was proof, as he said, against frost or storm
Jeff was clerk of the parish. His wife was dead ;
But she'd left him a treasure as dear in her stead,
Their only child, his darling Grace,
With her mother's love, and her mother's face ;
And the gloom which fell with the loss of his wife
Was dispelled by this heaven-sent light of his life ;
For Grace was loving as she was fair,
With her deep blue eyes and flaxen hair,
And though twenty summers she'd scarcely seen,
More than one smitten swain at her feet had been,
Or to ask the old man if he thought she would smile
On their suit ; but he answered them all, "Wait awhile."
We'd finished the flip, and prepared to start,
But the wind howled so fiercely, we'd scarcely the heart ;
And when Jefferson rose to open the door,
It rushed into the place with a terrible roar,
Filling the room with the flakes of snow,
I began to despair we should ever go.
'Twas decided we should ; but as I was young,
And never before with the choir had sung,
'Twas settled that I should remain in the place,
And be company there for Mistress Grace.

So we drew our chairs to the blazing logs,
Which sparkled and hissed on the "hangle dogs,"

That gave to our fancy such fantastic shapes,
Now castles, now cities, now angels, now apes.
We were laughing to see stately palaces fall,
When we heard at the window old Jefferson call,
“Grace, open the door, my child! open, I pray!
Be quick, dear!” he cried, as she rushed to obey.
Then he placed in her arms what appeared, by the glow
Of the log, was a bundle all covered with snow.
Then he rushed from the cottage, and Grace’s eyes
Bespoke her amazement and surprise.
But, oh, how great was her delight
When she beheld so strange a sight!
The bundle opened, disclosed to Grace
A baby girl with an angel face.
Like yesterday, I can see her there,
As she kissed the cherub with tenderest care,
And fed it, and warmed it, and hummed it a song,
And wondered to whom did the stranger belong.
Then the fairy tales flitted across her young mind,
In her girlish desire some solution to find.
Had she found a real princess, by pixies preserved
From a terrible fate, which no baby deserved?

When the party returned, all were anxious to know
What old Jefferson had (as he told them) to show.
His story was short. “I was waiting,” he said,
“For the rest of the choir, who had gone on ahead.

I could scarcely see for the blinding sleet,
When I fancied I heard a faint wail at my feet.
I had sheltered myself 'neath the Eastgate wall
From the piercing wind and the heavy fall,
And I thought that I heard the faint wailing again,
But weakly, and helpless, and seeming in pain.
I kicked a large heap by my side, when, lo !
That bundle you see there lay buried in snow.
I was startled at first, but my only thought
Was to do at once what a Christian ought ;
So Grace, my own darling, I give to you
A sister, for just an hour or two ;
And if nobody claims it, the parish must bear
The burden of this, so we 'll send it there."

Grace looked at her father, and begged she may
" Keep the dear little thing over Christmas Day."

He gave his consent, but, ah ! little he thought
With what danger that small concession was fraught ;
For when two long days had flitted by,
The old man said, with a moistened eye,
" Come, Grace, my daughter, the little waif
Must go where it 's sure to be happy and safe."

She begged again that another day
She might keep the babe ere 'twas taken away.
But her father shook his head, and smiled,
Kissed her fair forehead, and said, " My child,
To keep it with us would be unwise,
And may seem somewhat strange in other eyes ;

The world is too prone to misconstrue,
And condemn what e'en angels dare to do." "
She pleaded hard, and the old man saw
That his case was lost, and her love was law.
They kept the babe, but, strange to say,
Suitors were scarcer from that day.

• • • • •

Fifteen Christmas Eves had flown,
And Eve to a beautiful girl had grown :
They called her Christmas Eve, you know,
Because of the night she was found in the snow.
Old Jeff had gone from this world of strife
To join his good and loving wife ;
And Grace her tears of sorrow had shed
Where the daisies grew o'er her parent's head.
But the "bread on the waters" was surely cast,
When, in that night of storm and blast,
She took the foundling to her heart,
And kindled a love that should never depart.
Through a long, weary sickness Eve nursed her with care,
And at her side was ever there,
While o'er her "mother" she gently bent,
Like a guardian angel from Paradise sent ;
For Eve was her solace by day and by night,
The flowers on her pathway, her life, and her light.

The proud old lord of Rewe had died,
And his heir had taken himself a bride ;
There was joy at the manor, the yule log burned,
For the happy pair had just returned.
'Twas Christmas Eve, and the sky was clear,
And the song of carollers sounded near ;
The air was fresh, and the moon shone bright,
Pouring its rays of liquid light
So full and grand, that Heaven's gem
Seemed to herald the Star of Bethlehem.
" My lord seems sad," the lady cried,
" This should not be at Christmas-tide.
What ails my love ? I pray you say,
Why thus with you when all is gay ?"
He drew her gently to his breast.
" Alas ! 'tis true, I have no rest ;
And but for the love I know you feel,
My heart would fail me to reveal,
At such a time, on such a night,
The cause of my sorrow, which seems to blight
My every joy, and bids me sigh
When mirth should reign, and thou art nigh.
My sire was proud of the family tree,
And hugged our ancient pedigree ;
And oft he'd say, with the fiercest frown,
' Who dares to drag our pedigree down,
By union with an inferior line,
Shall be no son or heir of mine.'

He looked upon me with jealous care,
For, were she virtuous and fair,
'Twould weigh as nought, unless her line
Was of as ancient date as thine.

But oh ! my heart was young and warm,
I had no fear, I saw no harm,
If I should wed what pleased me,
E'en without wealth or pedigree.

I wooed and won a beauteous maid
Of humble birth, but was afraid
To tell my sire, whose wrath I feared
For sake of her to me endeared.

Too long he thought I'd been away,
Bid me return without delay ;
My regiment, too, was like to be
Soon sent to face the enemy.

I brought her to the lovely West,
I'd made resolve, and thought it best,
Should I confess what I had done,
To plead excuse through her I'd won.

I had arranged that she should dwell
In a pretty cot near Exwick dell ;
And she was content to know that I,
Though oft away, was ever nigh.

But on our joy a shadow fell,
Which I battled bravely to dispel ;
For the angel of death was hovering near,
Torturing me, mid hope and fear,

And our baby girl scarce saw the light
Ere the mother's spirit had taken flight.
The vow I made in that humble place,
As my tears fell on her dear dead face,
I have not kept, and my peace of mind—
Great Heaven, I fear I shall never find !
Look not with scorn, and you shall know
I never meant it should be so.
The child remained with the ancient pair,
Who never knew nor seemed to care.
Yet I was possessed of a foolish fear,
Lest my child and my home should be too near ;
For I had resolved, without delay,
To join my regiment for the fray.

“I knew one André Fabian,
Who ’d been my father’s serving-man,
Returning was to south of France,
And it occurred that he, perchance,
Might take the child, and that his wife
Would tend it well, and save her life ;
For the child was weak, and should I send
To south of France, a double end
By its removal would be served,
Both child and secret be preserved.
I thought my plan had well been laid,
And when a long farewell I bade

To home and friends, I little knew
To peace of mind I'd bid adieu.
André arranged that they should leave
For 'Les Martignes' on Christmas Eve,
In the trading vessel *Fleur de Mai*,
Which was to sail on Christmas Day.
I bade him come to the Eastern gate,
As the old cathedral clock struck eight ;
The snow and sleet beat in my face
As I met him at the appointed place.
He took the child, and from that day
What came of it I cannot say.
I troubled much through that long time,
By duty kept in a foreign clime ;
And when to Europe I returned
To see my child, my bosom yearned.
I sought De Fabian, but, alas !
The place a ruin, and the grass
With weeds around the dwelling grown—
Long vacant was too plainly shown.
All I could gather was, that he
Had ruined been, and crossed the sea.
A dame I saw, who said she knew
De Fabian well, and Madame too ;
And to my grief did she declare,
She never saw an infant there.
For years I sought my child to trace
In fruitless search from place to place.

Just twenty weary years have flown,
And now to you, sweet wife, I own,
Each Christmas Eve my heart is led
To mourn her if alive or dead.
But hark ! the Christmas waits I hear,
With them the past comes up too clear.
You now know why, when all is glad,
My heart is torn, and I am sad."

The Christmas waits had sung and played,
And my lord of Rewe came out and bade
Them enter, and partake of cheer,
And round the ashen log draw near.
"A Merry Christmas I pledge to you,
And welcome every one to Rewe,"
His lordship said ; when a servant came
To announce a beggarman, whose name
He couldn't pronounce, "but the fellow says
He was known to my lord in former days."
"Bid him come in, that I may see,"
His lordship said, "who he may be ;
He's welcome, be he known or not,
To such as we this night have got."
The man had scarcely passed the door,
The cup was dashed upon the floor ;
His lordship staggers with a groan—
"Great God ! De Fabian ! and alone !"

He sprang at his throat like a panther wild,
“ My child! Wretch, speak ! where is my child ?
You took my infant, you took my gold,
But I ’d have given a hundredfold
Of what I gave in that pitiless storm
To have saved my innocent child from harm.”
“ Par Bleu ! mi lor, vot do you say ?
Is this in earnest or in play ?
I vait outside the Vestgate vall
Till I freeze, but you nevare come at all.
I vait till viz snow I vas nearly blind,
And I left ven I think that you alter your mind.”
“ Did I not give the gold to you ? ”
“ Mon Dieu, I nevare receive a sou !
I get no child, I get no gold,
But vait all night in bitter cold.
I lose my all, and I tramp this vay
In hope for some help on Christmas Day ;
And instead of receive vot I expeck,
I find you take me by ze neck.”

The waits looked on in fear and dread,
But I had heard what De Fabian said ;
And my thoughts in a moment seemed to go
To the baby old Jefferson found in the snow.
“ Pray loose your hold, my lord, I pray,
For I desire a word to say.

Was it twenty years, and on Christmas Eve ?
If so, my lord, then I believe
That I on this matter can throw some light,
For an infant was found in the snow that night.
Your lordship speaks of the Eastgate wall,
He speaks of the West, and in that fall
Of snow your lordship made mistake,
And let some evil villain take
Your child and gold ; then on the ground
Left the babe to perish, where 'twas found."

'Twas then I related what I knew,
And in less than an hour my lord of Rewe,
With myself for a guide, gently knocked at the door
Of "the Wynard's home" for the worthy poor.

.

There was joy at the manor, the logs were piled,
And the bells rang out for the long-lost child ;
And ere another Christmas came,
The young heir of Rougemont rode out to claim
The beautiful Lady Eve as his bride.
But there was one who stood by her side
On that bridal morn, whose kiss of love
She prized all earthly things above—
Her foster-mother, who felt that morn
A joy in her soul that was heaven-born.

At Rougemont Castle there's mirth to-night,
Sweet music sounds, and the logs burn bright ;
But my Lady Eve, she would not miss
E'en on such a boisterous night as this,
To visit the old churchyard, and place
On the grave of her foster-mother, Grace,
That beautiful wreath, which is always seen
Each Christmas Day, looking fresh and green.
But hark ! St. David's choir I hear,
And the day of peace and love draws near.
I've told my story, and now you know
Who knelt to-night in the blinding snow ;
And I see that I need not tell you why
There's a love in her heart that can never die.





OLD PILKINGTON'S DOUBLE-BASS.

A STORY OF CHRISTMAS EVE.



H ! 'tis not for want of feeling,
Or that people are unmindful
Of the trials and the troubles,
Which beset us on our way
Through this world of thorns and roses,
Through these scenes of tribulation,
Leading onward to a brighter,
And an everlasting day.
Nor is it the deepest sorrow
Finds its way to open daylight ;
'Tis the suffering borne in secret,
Never breathed to mortal ears.
There's small need to fly to romance
For true heroines or heroes,
Nor can Dives know whose daily bread
Is often wet with tears.

Oh, ye trumpet-tongued philanthropists,
Who give but to emblazon
Your names before your fellows,

More to gratify your pride !

Would ye know how to discover
Where your bounty would be blessèd ?

Then go seek the quiet garret

Where true poverty doth hide.

But I 'm running from my story,
So I think at once I 'd better
Stop this sentimental musing,

Which, perhaps, at such a time
Is not exactly proper ;
For at this gay festive season
I 've no desire to cram you

With bad logic and worse rhymé.

Now I 'm never more delighted
Than when telling up a story
At which my willing listeners

Would rather laugh than cry ;

Though I 'll not pretend to prophesy
That this will be successful
In e'en calling up a smile,

Yet ne'ertheless I 'll try.

Well, 'twas when old Exon's city,
With its quaint old-fashioned gables,
Still had north, east, south, and west gates,
To mark the civic bound ;

When St. Sidwell's had its corn-fields,
And St. David's was a valley,
And the Castle walls of Rougemont
 Had their pleasure walks around.
When the now decayed localities
Of Pancras, Mary Arches,
And St. Smythen, and Exe Island,
 Had their mansions large and grand ;
When the citizens had buckles
On their shoes, and wore knee-breeches ;
And the porch 'neath the old Guildhall
 Was Ex'ter's market stand.
And the noble old Cathedral
Stood out in all its glory,
And the Close was broad and open,
 With its skirt of fine old trees ;
And the citizens delighted,
On the balmy autumn evenings,
To congregate on "Nornay's" slopes
 And catch the passing breeze.
Long before the Queen Street Station,
In the valley of St. David's,
Had cut off the stream of water
 Where the cresses used to grow ;
When the Exe was filled with salmon,
And the citizens could go there
And fish without condition,—
 No authority need show.

.

In a little gabled cottage,
In the parish of St. Pancras,
There lived old Herman Pilkington,
 Whose wife had long been dead ;
And the wrinkles in his forehead,
And his locks of frosted silver,
Plainly told that many summers
 Had passed o'er Herman's head ;
But withal he was as nimble
As some people are at thirty.
He could sing a song, and tell a tale,
 And always take his share
Of the home-brewed of the period ;
In fact, no city "outing"
Was considered half successful
 If old Herman wasn't there.
He'd a very pretty daughter,
Who attended to the duties
Of the little humble household,
 Made more cheerful by her face.
And on Sundays in the Choir
Of St. Pancras she assisted,
Where old Herman had for forty years
 Scraped on the double-bass.
And on Christmas Eve the Choir
Went around to all the houses
Of the most important citizens,
 For good old custom's sake ;

So the slumbers of the Bishop,
And, of course, the Dean and Chapter,
Oft at Christmas-time were broken
With their "Mortals, wake, awake!"

• • • • •

They had scraped and sung three pieces
At the mansion of the Bampfylds,—
For the steward always had them in,
And treated them like lords ;
And the stingo he provided
Cheered their hearts and cleared their voices,
And their faces glowed like Saxon
Alfred's bacchanalian bards.
But 'twas fortunate, extremely,
That the choir had serenaded
All the others ere they entered
'Neath that hospitable roof ;
For they all partook so freely
That on rising for departure
They gave evidence the beverage
Was at least of double proof.
Now they all, though slightly groggy,
Felt quite capable of walking
Till they reached where stood John's Hospital—
'Twas then an open square.
They felt as bold as lions,
As the snow upon them pelted ;
And, oh the wondrous magic
Of that little change of air !

The Clarionet, he staggered ;
And the Ophicleide looked silly ;
Whilst the old Trombone, he squatted.

On a heap of drifted snow.

Then the Sackbut went down sprawling,
And old Pilkington was leaning
For support upon his instrument,

And could no farther go.

Then the wind set up a howling,
And old Pilkington he bellowed,
“ Fetch my darter ! fetch my darter ! ”

As the snow swept in his face ;
When a mighty crash like thunder
Scared the maudlin musicians ;
For Pilkington had fallen on,

And smashed, his double-bass.

There were stifled sounds of “ Murder ”
From that instrument’s interior,
Like voices of the demons

From the regions down below.

Then the Clarionet attempted,
But in vain, to give assistance—
He declared that something held him fast,

And wouldn’t let him go.

Then the Piccolo he staggered
To where Pilkington was lying,
With the very best intentions
His good offices to do ;

But, alas ! he lost his footing,
And came down upon old Herman,
And the double-bass received him,
 But there wasn't room for two.
Now the wind was howling louder,
And the snow was falling faster ;
There seemed quite a probability
 That, ere the morning broke,
The drifting snow would cover
Up the Choir of good St. Pancras,
Which the old Trombone began to think
 Was far beyond a joke.
Only two amongst the party
Now were really in condition
To gather up the instruments,
 Or keep upon their feet.
'Twas the Flute and the Triangle,
And they tried to move the party ;
But they couldn't stir the Choir,
 Who were lying in the sleet.
Now whether 'twas the freshness
Of the night, I cannot tell you,
Or the swift evaporation
 Of the spirit they had drank ;
But the old Trombone he shuddered,
And looked up in wild amazement,
Whilst the melting snow had made the bass
 A semi water-tank.

So they picked themselves together ;
But, in spite of wind and weather,
Old Herman snored unconscious

In the bass. They turned him out,
When he glared like one bewildered,
As on the snow they placed him ;
And he rudely put the question

“What the devil be ee ’bout ?”

“Lor a massy,” bellowed Ophicleide,
“In goodness’ name where be us ?

I feel I got the rheumatis—

How ever came us here ?”

And the Clarionet was longing
For a drop more of the stingo,
Whilst the Sackbut stood and shook himself,

And felt uncommon queer.

Then the phantom band moved forward
Towards High Street, but they couldn’t
Get old Pilkington to walk or stand,

Or try to leave the place.

So the Flute and the Triangle,
Growing desperate, determined
To carry him, and therefore

Put him in the double-bass.

With assistance from the others,
Who to stand were scarcely able,
Old Pilkington was mounted

In the instrument he prized ;

And they staggered down the High Street
As the snow was pelting on them,
In danger every moment

That the lot would be capsized.

Still they managed to keep steady
Till they reached where now the office
Of the *Devon Weekly Times* is,

Or somewhere thereabout ;

When old Pilkington got restless,
Or he didn't like the jolting,
And he rose to reconnoitre,

And the bottom tumbled out.

Oh, if Hogarth had been living
'T would have well become his pencil—
The picture of true wretchedness

Presented by the Choir ;

But the shock had made them sober,
So they gathered up the pieces,
And got home to Herman's cottage

By a cheerful blazing fire.

Pilkington was sadly shaken ;
They all caught the influenza—
Mustard plasters, treacle possets,

And hot water for their toes,
Were prescribed by Doctor Squilby,
Who was looked on as a wonder,
And who always recommended
Tallow candle on the nose.

Old Pilkington got better,
But the loss of his big fiddle
Rested heavy on his conscience,
'T was an heirloom from his dad ;
And they never could persuade him,
From the date of that disaster,
To assist at Christmas carols.
"Quite enough" he said he'd had.

.

Many Christmases have vanished
Since old Pilkington departed,
And was gathered to his fathers ;
But the custom still remains,
With sweet music to remind us
That the years are swiftly passing ;
And may the day be distant
Ere we cease to hear the strains.





A ROLAND FOR AN OLIVER.

A STORY OF CHRISTMAS-DAY.



HE world is filled with cares and trials, ups and downs,
No matter what our calling, creed, or station ;
One day we get the public smiles, next its frowns.
He who with grace accepts the situation
Is a philosopher ; but I'm afraid such men
Are few and far between on this our planet.
We boast of love, forbearance, charity ; but then
We pride ourselves on hearts of strongest granite ;
And yet with all this high, self-lauding strain—
“Lords of creation,” “gods,” and all the rest,
Conceited, proud, ambitious, haughty, vain—
We’re but a set of noodles at the best !

Well, then, not far from Exeter resided
Miss Arabella Jopkins, with her mother ;

The dear old dame's paternal care divided
'Twixt Arabella and her little brother,
A most mischievous urchin, always late
At school, and such a limb at window smashing.
His greatest joy was swinging on a gate,
And giving smaller boys "a jolly thrashing."

Not far from Arabella's, well-to-do,
Lived Farmer Gosling and his buxom wife ;
His highest boast (I wonder if 'twas true ?)
"He never owed a penny in his life."
They'd two fine girls, one dark, the other fair ;
A little "nosey" for their social station.
Handsome, 'tis true ; and well they knew they were :
They very often got an invitation
To spend the evening up at Bunkum Hall,
Or join at croquet with the vicar's wife ;
And sometimes they'd attend the county ball ;
So felt a cut above a rustic life.
Their only brother, George, a strapping youth,
Was rather sweet on Arabella J. ;
But though she lacked not beauty, virtue, truth,
She had a horrid vice ; for which sin they,
His sisters, "shuddered at her lost condition."
"George, are you mad ? What ! throw yourself away ?
She's got no money ; worse, she's no position !"
Young Gosling liked the girl, and set at naught
The kind advice his loving sisters gave ;

But they made up their minds, they said they ought
To stop the match, and their “position” save.

Only a garden wall, not very high,
Divided Gosling’s grounds from Arabella’s,
So when the weather wasn’t very dry
You might have seen a pair of umbrellas ;
For every day, no matter what the weather,
He’d sit and whistle on that garden wall
Until she came, and there they’d chat together
To when her mother thought ’twas time to call.
Her little brother Sam, mischievous scamp
(They often wished him buried or in bed),
Would get behind the water-butt, and damp
Young Gosling’s bliss—shy “taties” at his head.
But then the course of love, so poets sing,
Was never smooth ; and Gosling’s love grew stronger,
Determined matters to a close to bring.
He’d ask her mother, he could wait no longer.
Dame Jopkins gave consent, they named the day,
And he became henceforth acknowledged guest.
But that young Sam was always in the way,
He’d stop at home and grin—the horrid pest.
The family of young Gosling, when they heard
How matters stood, were filled with great vexation ;
“Because,” they said, “he’d given them his word
He’d never marry one beneath his station.”

"His word was passed, and he should claim her hand."
The sisters tried all mortal means to stop her ;
Though, had they seen a chance above their stand,
They would have thought the alliance right and proper.

The wedding was arranged for Christmas-day ;
Friends were invited, preparations made,
A cake provided—"hundred weight" they say.
The banns were published, and the fees were paid.
At length the morn arrived, and little Sam
Had entered on that cake before 'twas time,
He also massacred three pots of jam
(I merely mention this to make a rhyme).
'Twas ten o'clock. The bride, in blue and white,
With numerous friends, unto the church repaired,
And all the place turned out to see the sight ;
The bride blushed, and no wonder, "they so stared."
Young Gosling had gone on before, and so
Was waiting in the church, as right he should.
The parson then commenced, and wished to know
"If this young man before the altar would
Take this young woman for his wedded wife ;
Renouncing all for her whilst here below,
And cleave unto her till the end of life?"
He saw his sisters, and he answered, "No!"

The scene that followed is beyond the power
Of earthly mortal to describe or paint ;

Each moment seemed at least quite half an hour.
A bridesmaid whispered, "Dear, you'd better faint;"
She took the hint, and went off like a lamb,
Which all her friends were quite upset to see;
Her brother was upset—but 'twas the jam
That upset him, as anyone could see.
Depraved young glutton! said 'twas a relief
To know no wedding luncheon there would be;
And, quite regardless of his sister's grief,
Said, "Don't ee cry, 'twill be more cake for me."

.

Young Gosling left the place. He'd been away
About ten months—I won't say to a week;
And when in Exeter, one market-day,
Ran slap against the girl—she wouldn't speak.
He felt downright ashamed, and well he might;
He craved forgiveness for his wicked act.
" 'Twas not his wish," he said, "to offer slight,
He'd promised mother, and could not retract;
So pray forgive me, though I cannot wed."
"On one condition only," answered she.
"Name it," he cried. "Then it is this," she said,
"That I make you the fool you once made me;
That I, before your friends and mine, shall say,
'No!' in responding to the parson's call;
That I, like you, shall turn and walk away,
And leave you there, the laughing-stock of all."

“ ‘Tis terrible,” he cried, “ but I submit.”
The Christmas-day was named, and friends invited ;
The church was filled, no room to stand or sit ;
And all except the bridegroom seemed delighted.

The pair stood at the altar as before,
He boldly did his part, and said, “ I will ;”
And heartily he wished the business o'er,
For now was coming his most bitter pill.
“ And wilt thou take this man ? ” the parson said.
She gazed upon him, but he looked so ill
Her heart was softened ; as he bowed his head
She smiled so sweetly, and she said, “ I will.”
“ Ten thousand Fenians,” young Gosling cried,
“ ‘Tis a mistake, she should have answered ‘ No.’ ”
“ It can’t be helped, love,” said the blushing bride,
“ There’s nothing more to say, we’d better go ;
I wouldn’t let them see the silly fool
I might have made you, had I been inclined.”
His rage was great, but he began to cool.
Then wisdom came ; he said, “ Well, never mind,
‘Tis done, and can’t be helped, that’s pretty plain.”
His friends forgave her that same afternoon ;
And from St. David’s, by the “ Four-ten ” train,
They went to Bath, and spent the honeymoon.

Years have flown by, and many a friendly face,
Which smiled upon the pair that Christmas-day,
Has long departed to earth's resting-place ;
E'en Gosling's hair's a little tinged with grey.
But not in any sweet Devonian dell
Is home more happy, or a face more bright ;
And every Christmas-day he loves to tell
His children how mamma once "served him right."
She smiles to hear him say he's cause to bless
The day "that sly young hussy answered 'Yes.'"





EXMOUTHESIA

AND THE GOOD FAIRY OF HONITON'S CLYST;

Or, The Demon Ogre of Dunchideock.

THE PLOT.

EXMOUTHESIA was the only and beautiful daughter of "Clyst St. Laurence," brother of "Clyst St. George," the same St. George whom we read of in history (?) as having fought and killed a Dragon at Aylesbeare. She [the lady, not the Dragon] was beloved by one Matthew the Miller, of Stepcot Hill; she was also beloved by Sir Moreton Hampstead, of Okehampton Castle, first cousin to Sir Isaac Newton-Abbot, of Bovey-Tracey [all in the "History of England" if you are not above-a-tracing it]; but Exmouthesia spurned the love of Sir Moreton, because, to use a classical expression, she was "gone" upon Matthew the Miller.

Sir Moreton, smarting under his humiliating slight, determines to carry her off, and for this purpose invokes the aid of the Demon Ogre of Dunchideock. The abduction is successful until they come to Dunsford Bridge, where Blackingstone-Heytore, a rival demon, who has over-

heard the arrangement between Sir Moreton and the Demon of Dunchideock, is waiting with his creatures to recapture Exmouthesia.

On arriving at Dunsford Bridge a terrible encounter takes place, in which Dunchideock's demons are beaten, and Blackingstone-Heytore rushes off with the fainting maiden, locks her up in Totnes Castle, and declares that none shall become possessed of her for less than twenty-five thousand pounds, and "mum's" the word.

The Demon of Dunchideock, who remained at the cottage of Exmouthesia, on Woodbury Hill, unaware that his creatures had been beaten and the lady recaptured, gloats over the grief of Matthew the Miller at the loss of his love, and endeavours to persuade him that she has run away with the Man in the Moon.

Matthew, in great distraction, sets out in search of his love, and in despair is about to throw himself over Cowley Bridge as the "Flying Dutchman" is passing, when the good fairy of Honiton Clyst appears upon the scene and informs him of the true state of affairs, giving him a magic key by which he can obtain an interview with King Gold, from whom he obtains the ransom required to release his lady-love. With a light heart he sets out for Totnes, but arrives in time only to find that Sir Moreton Hampstead has paid the required sum, and carried off the lady to Okehampton Castle. Matthew, disconsolate, returns to the neighbourhood of Honiton Clyst, calls all the villagers together, and forming the First Devon Volunteers, they march upon Okehampton Castle, storm the place, kill Sir Moreton, and throw his body into the river below, rescue Exmouthesia, and return with her in triumph, receiving an ovation from every town and village as they pass, whilst Okehampton Castle remains unto this day a heap of ruins.



SCENE I.

COTTAGE OF EXMOUTHESIA, ON WOODBURY HILL.

Exmouthesia discovered looking out of window.



OW very, very lonely is this place !
 I scarcely ever see a neighbour's face !
 Neighbours ? I've none, and friends I've very few,
 Except my Matthew. Ah ! then that'll do.
 Since pa's become a Mason, "Double Grand,"
 He stops out late ; nor can I understand
 Why 'gainst poor Matthew he's in such a tear,
 And talks of "grips" and "chapters" on *the square*.
 Pa so objects to Matthew ; says I'm bored,
 And ought to marry none but young *Sid' Ford* ;
 But I don't like him, though he calls me fairy,
 Because he flirts with *Haughty Wry St. Mary* (Ottery
 St. Mary).

I hate that girl, so vain, so proud ; she marches
 With *Mary Major*, and that *Mary Arches*
 Her eyebrows awfully, and tries to show
 Herself a *Belle* to catch *St. Stephen's beau (Bow)*.

How beautiful old Haldon Hills appear !
 The evening is so bright, so fresh, so clear,
 And distant objects seem so very near.
 I see the flagstaff on the Belvedere ;

The sun pours down its rays of golden light,
Making the *Exe Stream* look *Ex-tremely* bright.

'Tis very hard indeed I ne'er can go
Nice walks and trips like other girls I know.
Papa declares he doesn't think it right
That I should even go to post at night ;
And then he called me "silly little fool"
Because I asked to go to Salmon-Pool.
They're going to have a dance down in the park ;
I know they'll keep it up till after dark.
Matthew is there, and I am lonely still ;
I'm *Woodbury* sick ; in fact, I'm *Woodbury H-ill*.

SONG.

Father, dear father, come home to me now,
The church clock at Exmouth chimes eight ;
You know, like my mother I can't make a row,
And that's why you stop out so late.
The sun will soon go down behind Haldon Heights,
And the sea's coming in white with foam :
A very sure sign we shall have some rough nights—
So, father, dear father, come home.

Father, dear father, Sir Moreton's been here,
He's been plaguing me out of my life ;
And he's promised so much, I'm beginning to fear
He'll go wild if I won't be his wife.
But if Matthew's too bashful the question to pop,
I might be persuaded to roam ;

And then there's no knowing, pa, where it may stop—
So father, dear father, come home.

Enter MATTHEW THE MILLER.

Ah, Exmouthesia ! all alone I see ;
I'm come to ask you down to dance with me.
Do come, my love ; your pa objects, I know,
To trips upon the light, fantastic toe.
The berth I give him, dear, is precious wide—
He's always threatening to "tan" my "hide."
I'd rather not be treated in this manner ;
I'll stand my ground, but cannot stand a *tanner*.

EXMOUTHESIA.

I think 'tis not because you fear my father
You keep away so much ; perhaps you'd rather
Dance with some other girl, who has no faults.
But tell me, will they dance the Mabel waltz ?

MATTHEW.

They will, my love.

EXMOUTHESIA.

Then go, and tell them all
That I agree to ope with you the Ball.

SONG.

We 'll dance that waltz, the Mabel waltz ;
But, my love, you see
'Gainst that tune my mind revolts
When 'tis played to me.

Still my love soars above our cathedral tower.
 Say the word, sweetest bird, for I'm in your power,
 And we'll dance that waltz, that Mabel waltz ;
 And Godfrey's band shall play,
 Till everyone's sick of the Mabel waltz,
 Hearing it every day.

[*Exit* MATTHEW.]

Enter SIR MORETON.

Ah, there she is ! what great R.A. could paint
 Such beauty ? She's asleep ! She ain't !
 Down on my bended knees, sweet Woodbury Lily.

EXMOUTHESIA.

Get up, Sir Moreton ; pray don't look so silly !

SIR MORETON.

What ! spoil my beauty, now so much admired.
 Would you believe it, this *physog*'s inspired
 An "Angel ;" that is, when he took my *Carte-de-Visite* here, Miss also took my heart.

EXMOUTHESIA.

I've told you twenty times I would not wed
 A man with such a stony heart and head.

SIR MORETON.

Oh, say not so, or you will crack my heart !
 Nor *Dart-moor* spiteful glances, or the *Dart*
 Shall be my grave, and then most likely you
 Will paddle o'er my head your own canoe.

SONG.—From *Faust*.

Come, my love, at once away ;
 Come, let's no longer stay ;
 I'll be your slave by night and by day.
 Make my heart glad, don't drive me mad ;
 Come, let's away.

EXMOUTHESIA.

Don't you wish that you may get it ?
 Marry a scrub like you ! oh, dear, no, thank you !
 I've got one who loves me dearly ;
 If you don't go, you'll be horsewhipped severely.

SIR MORETON.

Vengeance I'll have upon his head.
 Perhaps she'll have me when he's dead—
 Perhaps I shall get a jolly good kicking instead.
 By all that's blue, or of horrible hue,
 Vengeance I'll have.

[Rushes out.]

The saucy jade, with kindness I could kill her ;
 She loves that Matthew chap, a stripling miller.
 Just like my luck ; I think this is the fifth
 That's cut my comb, and sent my barque adrift.
 I'll not be thwarted, neither will I pout,
 But I'll turn " Maggie's Secret " inside out.

SONG. Air—*Maggie's Secret*.

I loved a young woman, she didn't love me.
 That was awkward, of course, you'll allow ;

But I thought she 'd come round, so I let her “*a' be*,”
 As 'twas no use to kick up a row.
 I made her fine presents, but all was no use,
 She only laughed in my face,
 And gave me all manner of sauce and abuse,
 Whilst her pa kicked me out of the place ;
 And she told me I need not come spooning to she,
 For my chance, my chance was all U. P.

I sung all the new music, from “Grandfather's Clock”
 To “Paddle your own Canoe,”
 “Meet me in the Lane” when the clock strikes nine—
That I never could get her to do.
 I was “Dreaming of Angels” from morning till night,
 And kept bellowing “Ever of Thee,”
 When she said there 's a place down at Exminster
 Where they put all such boobies as me,
 And she told me I need not, &c.

CLYST ST. LAWRENCE *enters the Cottage.*

My darling child, you see I 've not stopped late,
 Although I had to pass the “Pinhoe Gate.”
 Unhanging gates is not my *stile*, you know,
 For they 'll *Pin-he* who tries to cheat *Pin-hoe*.
 Bring me my pipe. You 're looking rather pale.
 Has Matthew been here, pitching up a tale ?
 I 'll warm his jacket, the conceited elf,
 As once your mother's father warmed myself.

SONG. Air—*Polly Perkins.*

Oh, the days of my youth's joys and pleasures are past,
And I'm come to grey whiskers and agues at last;
But I'll ne'er be down-hearted; I never have been,
And I think to give way is uncommonly green.

Spoken.

Ah! 'tis but as yesterday
When I used to chase the butterflies
O'er the meadows so green
With your mother, such a pretty, pert thing,
As proud as a queen.

SCENE II.

*GLITTERING ABODE OF THE FAIRY QUEEN IN
THE REALMS OF FANCY;*

Pearly Grotto of Oyster Shells on Exe Island; the Gasometer
by Moonlight.

FAIRY QUEEN.

Come, my sweet fairies, there's no time to lose;
We've lots to do, and I've got lots of news—
The parliamentary squabbles, fights, and fines,
The *Flying Post*, *Gazette*, *Western* and *Weekly Times*,
Singing each other's praises hot and strong:
The love's too hot, I fear, to last too long.
'T is pleasant to behold their mutual love,
The " Flying Angel " and the " Western Dove,"
The " Devon Weekly Balm " and " Tell-a-cram,"
Mixed up together, what an awful jam!

SECOND FAIRY.

But is it true at Christmas-time they drink
Each other's health in bumpers of hot ink?

THIRD FAIRY.

Oh, yes, 't is true ; for I was of the party :
They shook each other by the hand quite hearty.
The *Post* shed tears at this fraternal revel,
And hugged and kissed each other's "printer's devil."
"Let 's all amalgamate," said one, "we may be happy yet,
And call our sheet *The 'Western,' 'Weekly,' 'Flying,'*
'Gazette.'"

Though whilst we joke them, we must not forget
We owe the Press a deep and lasting debt,
Racking the brain by night and day to find
Food for the ever fickle public mind—
A hydra-headed monster. Ah, these men
Are rightly, fairly termed, Knights of the Pen.

But sometimes, when a reader asks redress,
They're apt to stint this freedom of the Press.
"Our correspondent's letter's much too long ;
His arguments won't do, they're much too strong ;"
"Our correspondent's views are right, no doubt ;
But press of matter's great—you're crowded out."

SONG.

What complications editors are blessed with every day,
Humouring correspondents, who will always have their say :

One writes a letter three yards long, in which *he* has no doubt
That all the world is wrong, and *he*, why he is “crowded out.”

Oh, 'tis nice to be an editor, one of the modern times !

One fancies he 's a poet, but the people are such fools,
And “utterly too utter” for our great æsthetic schools ;
His last effusion will, he says, put Tennyson to rout ;
He 's made a hit, but has a fit on being “ crowded out.”

Oh, 'tis nice to be an editor, &c.

Then some one at the office calls, and swearing he has read
A libel on his honour, means to shoot the writer dead ;
The editor sends down a note to say he 's ill in bed ;
So they compromise the matter, and they punch each
other's head.

Oh, 'tis nice to be an editor, &c.

I 've sent to ask the Fairy of the Sea
If she 'll come up and take a dish of tea
In Lympstone Cave, with Fairies Earth and Air,
But as 'tis private—“ no reporters there.”

*Enter QUEEN OF THE SEA drawn upon the water by
two beautiful white swans.*

QUEEN OF THE SEA.

I 'm come at last, I hope it 's not too late.

FAIRY QUEEN.

You 're welcome to the shore, at any rate ;
But ere I tell you what 's been done above,
Tell us what 's going on below, my love.

QUEEN OF THE SEA.

Oh, dreadful ! What d' ye think ? the other day,
As I and twenty nymphs were out at play
At hide-and-seek amongst the coral beds,
A great black ugly line dropt o'er our heads.
Pearlesia first looked up, a scream she gave,
Then darted down into our ocean cave.
We followed her, to speak when she was able.
She cried, " They're laying the Atlantic cable ! "
We all rushed out ; I said we would not stand
This base intrusion ; seized it in my hand
With firm resolve to break the rope in two,
When twenty thousand needles pierced me through.

When I looked up this side of Exmouth Bar,
I knew from Exeter I wasn't far ;
I saw by Earl of Devon's Belvedere
Semper Fidelis must be pretty near.
They want a little mending, " Exmouth Docks ; "
They wouldn't let me pass at Double Locks ;
They said I'd stolen these swans near Starcross Station
From Captain Peacock—dreadful accusation !
I said, " With theft my name was never tainted ;
How can these *Swans* be *Peacock's* ? " then they fainted.
But let's to business. What's it all about ?
A special commission this ; and I've no doubt
'T will do more good, and not cost half the sum
They spend on some commissions ; but that's " mum. "

Enter FAIRY PROGRESS.

Here, stop a moment ; I feel rather slighted.
I'd like to know why I was not invited ?
Can anything be done without my aid ?
Surely of Progress none should be afraid.
Was it not I who, when the world was dark,
Lit up an intellectual fire ? And, lo ! the spark
Has flashed throughout the world—a chain to bind
In universal friendship all mankind.
I gave excursions cheap by land and sea ;
Your wealth and happiness are due to me.
My name is found with every useful movement,
And I am recognized in all improvement ;
And plenty more I'll do, if you'll invite me.
'T will damp my good intentions if you slight me.
I freed the slaves ; that dark, thick, sickly cloud
Has melted 'fore the intellectual sun,
Whose genial rays shall ripen glorious fruit.
Now some of you begin—I've done.

FAIRY QUEEN.

Well, then, 't is this : We're in a dreadful fright,
What with the trams and the electric light,
The rows in parliament and lady's dress—
All filling "Fairydom" with great distress.
And as you are the medium of all nations,
We think you ought to join our consultations,
Although, my dear, we'd have it understood
That mid the evils there is much that's good.

And Exeter is all alive, they say ;
 They're going to launch a lifeboat there to-day ;
 A nobler act a city scarce can do.
 Great Spirit of the Storm, guide and protect her crew !
 God speed the boat our prayer shall ever be,
 May she glide safely o'er the angry sea,
 And bless the men who risk their lives to save
 A fellow-mortal from an ocean grave !

So let's with pleasure pass the time away ;
 All Devon rings with unmixed joy to-day.

SONG. Air—*Spring, Spring.*

Oh for a fairy's life down by the sea,
 Free from all care and strife, happy are we !
 We've no "bank bubbles" but those from the waves ;
 We are the "treasures" which lie in the caves.
 Let the world scramble, tumble, and fight ;
 Let them to law go, and swear that black's white ;
 Let them with piety cheat young and old.
 I wouldn't be mortal for caverns of gold.

Oh for a fairy's life, &c.

Enter DEMON OGRE OF DUNCHIDEOCK.

What horrid, dreadful, happy sounds are these ?
 They set my teeth on edge ; and, oh, my knees
 Shake like a pot of size to hear them say,
 All Devon rings with unmixed joy to-day.
 But I've a plan to stop their hated mirth ;
 If I succeed, the city shan't be worth

What now remains of old St. David's Station—
 I 'll shake their "Simper Fiddlestick's" foundation.
 What ho ! my "Aids-de-Scamps," Cockwood, Dawlish, ho !
 Axminster, Exmouth, Topsham, Brampford, Bow !

[*Imps all rush in.*]

Speak, Brampford-Speke, is Hall-done *Hill* done well ?

IMP.

Ax-mister, great Dunchideock, he can tell.

SECOND IMP.

'Tis all done well. Let 's strike at once.

DUNCHIDEOCK.

We will !

A good time, too. John 's-cross, and David 'sh-ill.
 Go guard St. Thomas by the turnpike gate ;
 You *Ide* in Alphington—lie still and wait
 Until you hear my well-known trumpet call ;
 That is, when we *All-Hallows* on the *Wall*.
 Take all their gold, take Little Silver too ;
 I can't a-Shillingford to lose, 'tis true.
 Six go to Westgate, take what arms you 've got,
 Because down there, I know, you 'll catch it hot.
 I 'll up the town, and make the Grecians bolt,
 And seize St. Sidwell's with a "Lion's Holt."
 If you succeed, I 'll take the filthy dross,
 And make you Knights of——

ALL.

What ?

DEMON.

The Grand *Star Cross*.

SONG. Air—*Over the Garden Wall.*

We'll go to the Grecians, and make them fly
 Over the garden wall ;
They'll run if they see me but cock my eye
 Over the garden wall.
We'll use the steam roller their force to evade,
We'll steal all the arms from the Rifle Brigade,
And then bolt into Southernhay through the Arcade,
 Then over the garden wall.

Over the garden wall, so list to my trumpet call ;
We'll wallop 'em yet, the whole of the set ;
And you may bet they'll ne'er forget
The terrible whacking they're likely to get
 Under the garden wall.

Enter GOOD FAIRY.

Stay, ugly monster ! know you I've the power
To spoil your scheme in less than half-an-hour !
I've overheard your vile and wicked plan,
But I defy you—do it if you can.
No, beauteous Devon, thou hast nought to fear
While the Good Fairy of the Clyst is near ;
Long shall thy maidens' grace excel, thy children smile,
And thou acknowledged "Garden of our Isle."
May this year's trade by far exceed the last,
And all ill feeling buried with the past.
May Afric's sun set red in blood no more ;
May Peace and Friendship stretch from shore to shore ;
May man to man be little more the brother.

DEMON.

Like our Town Council, dote on one another.

FAIRY.

Yes, like our Council, though sometimes 'tis true
We see too much of yellow and of blue.
With all their rows and squabbles, you must say
They beat the House of Commons any day,
And do their very best for public good.

DEMON.

Ah ! that they may, but I don't think they should ;
I love to see them thwart each other's aims,
Rake up old sores, and call each other names.

FAIRY.

But come, old Hangback, surely you 'll admit
They've done some good since North Street was a pit,
And South Street houses used almost to meet,
And friends upstairs shake hands across the street.
Then look at Queen Street, but the other day
The old Swan Tavern stood and stopped the way ;
But now, behold, as if by fairy hand,
As finest street in Devon takes its stand.
St. David's Station—come, object to that ;
More like a palace than a railway station ;
The other day a damp, low-lying flat,
Now use and beauty marks the situation.

DEMON.

Oh, thanks, Directors Green, Jones, Jenkins, Brown,
To build that splendid station out of town.
'Tis glorious to feel, in the pouring rain,
Folk have to walk a mile the town to gain.

FAIRY.

The old Guildhall, they 've much improved that place.

DEMON.

They'd better take him home and wash his face.
But there, I like to see things dark and small ;
"Justice is blind," so why light up the hall ?

FAIRY.

There's lots of institutions in the city :
The School of Art, Museum.

DEMON.

More's the pity.

I hate museums, art, science, knowledge, books.
Why know them more than I know lords or dukes ?
With lords and dukes and books, like many a swell,
I learn their names, and boast I know them well.
And your "Teign Valley," too, looks well on paper.

FAIRY.

And it shall end in steam, and not in vapour.
But really, sir, I 've something else to do
Than waste my time in arguments with you.

I see 'gainst all that's good you're waging war;
 Yet pray remember you may go too far.

[*Exit.*]

DEMON.

She little thinks the game I have in hand
 I'll scatter 'em as "Bass" the German band.

SONG. Air—*German Band.*

In me you see a literary demon. As author I've no equal :
 In the first and second volume I raise their spirits up,
 And I drop them down again in the sequel.
 If you wish to make a hit, you must lie above a bit ;
 For the people want, and will have, sensation ;
 And I intend to swear that for rot and passion rare
 You haven't got my equal in the nation.
 To talk of Dickens, Tupper, Tennyson,
 Miss Braddon, Brown, or anyone,
 Or all the first-rate authors in the land,
 For murder, mist, or haddle, I'd make them all skedaddle,
 As "Old Bass" he did the "German Band."

SCENE III.

COTTAGE OF EXMOUTHESIA.

She has just returned from the Ball, and is seated before the glass taking down her back hair. Demons peeping in at the window, down the chimney, through the key-hole, &c.

EXMOUTHESIA.

Oh, what a jolly dance we've had to-day !
 Sir Moreton came, I soon sent him away.

And Whimple paid me very marked attention ;
And Feniton—well, there, I never mention.
Young Sidmouth challenged Budleigh out to fight
Because he danced with me three times to-night ;
I was alarmed at first, but Branscombe said, “Don’t fear ;
If he begins I’ll *Seat-on* on his *Beer*. ”
But Matthew took me off whilst they were foaming,
And, oh, ’t was very pleasant in “the gloaming.”

SONG. Air—*In the Gloaming.*

In the gloaming I am combing
Out my locks of flaxen hair,
And I know who saw me home in
Such a handsome sedan-chair ;
But should old Sir Moreton ask me
If I’d wed him, this I’ll do,
Answer pertly, “Oh dear no, sir,
Best for me, and best for you.”

In the gloaming I’ve been roaming
All around St. Mary’s Clyst,
With my Matty, oh, so chatty,
And so gentle when he kissed !
But when I’m Mrs. Matthew
I’ll allow him no latch-key ;
For as husbands go I think ’tis
Best for him and best for me.

I’ll shut the window, for ’tis getting colder.
I wish that Matthew was a little bolder ;

He's too reserved, and scarcely speaks a word.
I would he would!—I “would I were a bird!”

SONG. Air—Would I were a Bird.

He scarcely speaks one word, and yet I cannot see
Why Matthew should prefer some other girl to me;
And yet I know full well, however fair she be,
He would not wish to woo her; because he doats on me.
Ah! when we went to Dawlish, that afternoon so dear,
When we walked across to Teignmouth, and made love
upon the pier;
But oh, I fancy now he's whispering to me
That

SONG.

He'll never come back any more,
He'll never come back any more,
That he'll go away and live at Torbay,
Shaldon, or Labrador.
But I'll lock up the house if he does,
And I'll bar every window and door;
I'd join him at once, and I'd marry the dunce,
And we'd never come back any more.

[*Demons and sprites rush in and seize her; she is about to scream when they ram in her mouth a half-dozen West of England Bank shares; she faints.*

DEMON.

Now take her gently, softly down the hill;
Shun the West Quarter, or p'raps Upright's mill

May damp your courage, if the "lambs" should see ;
 Don't wake the turnpike man at Heavitree ;
 Be soft as *spectres* when you pass Guildhall,
 For the *inspector* there suspects us all.

SONG. Air—*Pretty Little Sarah.*

Pretty little fairy, take her up with care ;
 Don't joggle down the hill, I give you warning ;
 If out of place upon her head you put a single hair,
 I'll drown you in the Teign to-morrow morning.
 When you pass St. Thomas's don't evade the toll,
 Or, like the "Haldon postboy," they may put you in
 the hole ;
 Tell my friend Sir Moreton I'll be with him by-and-by ;
 Meet me down at Fingle Bridge, where the Teign runs
 high.
 Pretty little fairy, &c.

SCENE IV.

DUNSFORD BRIDGE BY MOONLIGHT.

Blackingstone-Haytor, surrounded by his creatures, listening for the approach of the captors of Exmouthesia.

BLACKINGSTONE.

Steady, my friends, don't let a sound be heard,
 Rush smack out on 'em when I give the word.
 They stop *Long-down* on *Pok-ham* Bridge, I fear
 The length of journey makes them rather queer ;
 Or p'rhaps it is the new electric light,
 They've lost their way and dazzled up their sight.

But hark ! they come ; they're fuddled all, I knew it ;
 Powder-hem well, for we Ken-Ford to do it.

[They arrive on Dunsford Bridge, a terrible conflict takes place, the scene closes as Blackingstone-Haytor rushes up the Teign Valley with the fainting Exmouthesia in his arms.]

SCENE V.

COWLEY BRIDGE.

Enter MATTHEW *and* DEMON OGRE OF DUNCHIDEOCK.

MATTHEW.

My Exmouthesia ! no, it can't be so ;
 I'll ne'er believe it possible she 'd go !

DEMON.

Young man, 'tis true, she went this afternoon ;
 Eloped with him who lives up in the moon.
 She said you needn't look, you 'd never find her,
 And you might go and sing the "Organ Grinder."

MATTHEW.

Up in the moon ! then all my hopes are blighted,
 Like London's Ex-Lord Mayors, I feel be-knighted.
 To find my love I 'd give the wealth of mines.
 Come back to him who sits on Cowley Bridge, and Pynes !

SONG. Air—*O believe me if all.*

Oh, I 'll stray o'er the county from morning till eve,
 Though perhaps I 'm a silly young spoon ;

Yet *nil desperandum*, I 'll never believe
 That she 'd bolt with the Man in the Moon.
 Come down, if you 're there ; drive my sadness away,
 Or they 'll take me to Exminster soon,
 And never again, if once there, shall I stray
 " By thy sweet silver light, bonny moon."

[*He is about to throw himself over the bridge, when the Good Fairy of Honiton Clyst appears.*

GOOD FAIRY.

Stay, stay, young man ! Do nothing rash, I pray.
 She 's not up there ; your love 's been stolen away :
 She 's locked in Totnes Castle, and I doubt
 If aught but ready cash will get her out.

MATTHEW.

In Totnes Castle ! Perhaps the light of day
 She 'll ne'er Sey-mour (see more). H-O-tell, I pray !
 My heart is brave and firm, my hand is steady.

FAIRY.

That won't release her.

MATTHEW.

Then what will ?

FAIRY.

The Ready.

Here, take this ring, and by its magic power
 You 'll see King Gold within this very hour.

Lose not a moment, or your chance is lost ;
 Possess the treasure, never mind the cost.
 Others will offer sums, by no means small ;
 But you, with thirty thousand, *Topsham* (tops 'em) all.

MATTHEW.

Ah, true ! I'm going to an awful place.
 If I disguise, they will not know my face ;
 But if that Anstey's Cove demands a parley,
 Who shall I say I am ?

FAIRY.

Oh, Nelson Varley !

But when she's yours, no flirting I should stand ;
 Take my advice, and keep her well in hand.

SONG. Air—*Baby Mine.*

I shall stop all this coquetting when she's mine, when
 she's mine ;
 All her pouting, all her fretting, when she's mine, when
 she's mine.
 I shall quickly let her see that her lord I mean to be ;
 She shall honour and obey me when she's mine.

She shall dress as I think proper when she's mine, when
 she's mine ;
 No more ulster, tie, and topper, when she's mine, when
 she's mine ;
 I'll commence the wedding-day to have everything my way,
 Love, honour, and obey, when she's mine, when she's mine.

SCENE VI.

ABODE OF KING GOLD,

Thirty miles below the Dunchideock Treacle Mines ; horrible smell of burnt Debenture Bonds ; King Gold, who is lying on a heap of glittering metal, raises himself up, rubs his jaundiced eyes, and exclaims :

'Tis tiresome work to be here so confined ;
By worthless paper I've been left behind.
I used to shake my head, when up it went ;
And what's the consequence ? I'm 2 per cent. !
Breathes there a man on this colossal globe,
Rolling through space 'twixt millions of its kind,
Who with his thoughts a half-spent life can probe,
Yet in its depths no bygone pleasures find ?
I am not he ; and yet what little cause
Have I to look with pleasure on my days !
Oh, I was happy until ruthless man
Coined me, and sent me twenty thousand ways !
I make acquaintance with all kinds of men ;
I tramp the world, but I come back again.
They should have let me rest, the hungry knaves !
But now they own my power, they're all my slaves.

SONG. Air—*Power of Love.*

I'm a power whose sway mortals all adore ;
Keeps dull care at bay, oft makes rich feel poor ;
Hungry mortals prize, makes the coward bold ;
Blinds some people's eyes—great the power of Gold !

Source of joy and woe, source of love and hate,
 Should I quickly go, then they call it “fate.”
 Princes own my spell, beggars kiss my mould ;
 Language cannot tell half the power of Gold !

Enter MATTHEW.

I’m here at last ! But what a horrid place !
 Who’s that old man asleep, with shining face ?
 ’Tis Gold. I dare not wake him, yet I must.
 Sweet Fairy of the Clyst, to thee I trust.

[*Calls GOLD.*

GOLD.

Who calls for me at this strange time of night ?
 Another worshipper of yellow light ?
 Was ever mortal being so annoyed,
 Or with the baser metals so alloyed ?
 They call me cursed, filthy lucre, dross !
 That’s only when my votaries are cross—
 When of my smiles they cannot get enough,
 ’Tis then I’m horrid, vile, and filthy stuff.
 They curse my very name, spit in my face,
 And call me evil genius of their race.
 I smile—they kiss my hand, and grin like apes ;
 But when I frown—oh, then ’tis “fox and grapes !”
 The willing slave of all, yet I am king ;
 For those who trust me I can have no sting.
 ’Tis those who know me, yet abuse my worth,
 I do their will, and crush them to the earth.

Oh, how I hate the man who loves me most,
Yet keeps me captive, like unransomed host,
And will not let me see the light of day
Lest I might fall in love, and run away !
Have I not in the hands of goodly men
Made paradise of many a spot? 'Tis when
I help the needy, comfort the distressed,
Is my true mission understood and blessed.
Widows and orphans bless me, devils damn :
'Tis those who use me make me what I am.

But what's your errand? Do you want to be
A worshipped fraud in huge philanthropy ;
Or do you wish to take the markets unawares—
Run down some honest scheme, and buy the shares ?
Or seek to act as friend to some young gent,
And lend him cash at ninety-five per cent.?
Or do you want my aid to buy and sell
Your needy neighbours? Come, your business tell !

MATTHEW.

'Tis not, great spirit, for myself I pray
Your kindly aid in a pecuniary way ;
'Tis to release my love, so young, so fair,
I ask your help, to ease my dire despair.
She's locked in Totnes Castle, and I've found
To get her out takes thirty thousand pound.

GOLD.

No very small request. But take it, boy.

MATTHEW.

Oh, I could turn a *Somerset* for joy !
Dear Exmouthesia, to thee I come.

GOLD.

Don't make a noise, or you might lose it. "Mum!"

SONG. Air—*Tramp, tramp.*

If our fathers could but see
What a clever lot are we—
What improvement and what change has taken place—
How 'twould make our grannies stare !
Very likely they 'd declare
'Twas the work of him who dwells in yonder place.
But, ah ! 'tis the intellect that's marching,
And glorious work we yet intend to do.
If we all go hand in hand, then no obstacle can stand
'Gainst the useful, good, the beautiful, and true.

Now the Devon School of Art
Is intended to impart
A strong desire for elevated taste ;
And a wise and useful movement
Is the Working Men's Improvement,
So all who haven't joined it pray make haste.
With the knowledge you have got don't be contented,
Although you 're very clever all, no doubt,
You may try with all your might
To be foremost in the fight ;
But it 's ten to one your sons will snuff you out.
For, ah ! 'tis the intellect, &c.

SCENE VII.

TOTNES CASTLE.

Exmouthesia closely guarded, attended by the wife of
Blackingstone-Haytor.

EXMOUTHESIA.

Why do they keep me here from day to day?
I can't escape ; I've tried to every way.
That Haytor's wife, I hate her worse than he ;
She tells me Lady Moreton-Hampstead I must be.
If Matthew only knew, 'twould break his heart.
When I get out of this I'll make them smart ;
I hear them every night, the row they make
About the price, and I am kept awake.
Last night Sir Moreton raved and stamped, and swore
He wouldn't pay a blessed penny more.

SONG. *Air—Write Me a Letter.*

Sadly I sit me and weep—weep as I have not for years.
Why do my eyes fail to keep back my vexation and tears ?
I think of dear Matthew away. Oh, why did they force
me to roam ?

Will someone go tell him for me
To come here and take me back home ?
Has he forgotten me now,
Or know how they forced me to roam ?
Someone go tell him for me
To come here and take me back home.

[*Matthew arrives at Totnes, and is met by the wily creatures of Blackingstone, who keep him bartering and spending the ransom, until he discovers that Sir Moreton-Hampstead has paid the required sum, and carried off the prize.*

MATTHEW.

Unlucky Matthew ! Miserable fate !
 Arrived in time enough to be too late.
 But there 's one consolation : well I know
 That I am not the very first to go
 Down into Totnes borough for redress
 Well stocked with cash, and then return with less !

SONG.

I went down to Totnes with plenty of tin,
 And thought it no difficult matter to win ;
 But they "skinned" me entirely out of my heap,
 And my sole consolation 's to bear it and weep !
 Dawkins was dawkey ; what money he spent !
 A great in-dent-ation they made in poor *Dent*.
Seymour was artful—he 'd been there before ;
 They 'd seen *much* of his cash, but they 'd never see *more* !
 Those chaps, they try, &c.,
 All to console me, but that 's all my eye ;
 I bet a penny they 'll fail by-and-by.

I 'll go back to Woodbury, and let them all see
 How those independent electors served me.
 Catch me down there again—never no more !
 If Rothschild went near them they 'd make him quite poor.

I 'll muster an army from villages round,
 And we 'll march through the county until we have found
 The tyrant Sir Moreton, and put out his light ;
 And we 'll show to Creation how Devon can fight !

Those chaps, those chaps, &c.

SCENE VIII.

ABODE OF THE DEMON OGRE OF DUNCHIDEOCK,

In the Quicksilver Mines under Exwicke.

DEMON.

Well, things are coming to a pretty pass !
 People are all good friends ; and we, alas !
 Are now compelled to drop the demon-brother,
 And live, like vampires, upon one another !
 To think that Blackingstone, when all seemed well,
 Should whack my imps, and carry off the “gell,”
 And even then refuse the smallest share—
 “Honour 'mong thieves,” his conduct wasn't square !
 Nothing seems wrong, and everything looks bright ;
 I cannot even make Town Councils fight.
 I wish I could. My power has left my hand ;
 I feel an *exile* quite, on *Exe-island*.

SONG.—*Beautiful Isle of the Sea.*

Beauteous Exe Island for me !
 Home of great rows and hot water,
 Queer are your memories to me—
 Songs of the rat-catcher's daughter ;

Emptying ashes and pails
 Into the murmuring river.
 Sniffing the scent of fish-scales,
 Oh, I could wander for ever !
 Round Tree in Ewing's Lane,
 Place ever dear unto me.
 Talk of Mount Radford ! don't name
 It with beauteous Exe Island for me !

SCENE IX.

OKEHAMPTON CASTLE.

Sir Moreton not altogether pleased with his success.

SIR MORETON.

Sir Moreton, you're a fool ; for you have been
 And gone and done it—made a Frankenstein !
 You've bought the treasure at a frightful cost ;
 I almost wish my path she'd never crossed.
 If I advance, or try a gracious smile,
 She pulls a face as if my looks were vile.
 She's awful Sour-ton if I try to show
 My nose ; but in her presence Bride's-toe
 Kicks out tremendous. *Yestor* said he found
 It *Yestor*-day, to Lift-on off the ground.
 I'll break her heart, if I can't break her will,
 As sure as yonder bubbling, babbling rill
 Rises on Dartmoor, where I roam about
 All night, because my lady locks me out.
 I've tried to win her love ; the songs I've sung,
 And in response but get my poor nose rung.

I wonder why it is? It grieves me sadly
To think with ladies I get on so badly;
But never mind, I'll change her note ere long;
Meantime I'll serenade her with a song.

SONG.

The daisies were peeping,
Primroses were creeping
Quite bashfully out to be kissed by the sun.
Two lovers were walking,
And whispering and talking,
And sighing and blushing, as others have done.
“ How delightful ’t will be,
Dearest Clara,” said he,
“ When the face of the sun comes out radiant as thine.”
When she raised her blue eyes
Not quite up to the skies,
And exclaimed, “ Would to heaven it never would shine ! ”
The lover looked frightened,
His wonder was heightened
As a large crystal tear darted down her pale cheek.
“ Oh, tell me, my dearest,
What is it thou fearest ?
Why dread the blest sunshine ? Speak out, darling, speak,
And say what mighty grief
Has broke in like a thief
On the peace of my loved one ! Why so cast down ? ”
“ Then I’ll tell you,” she cried,
As her lover she eyed,
“ T would make your old hat look so dreadfully brown.”

SCENE X.

NEIGHBOURHOOD OF HONITON CLYST.

Inhabitants of the neighbourhood in great consternation at the disappearance of Matthew.

VILLAGER.

We cannot find poor Matthew, high nor low!
 Did any one in the village see him go?
 He talked of going to the moon or sun,
 A thing by far more easy said than done.
 He's lost his sweetheart, and he's lost his head,
 And with poor Matthew all our fun has fled.

SONG. *Air—Up in a Balloon.*

We've hunted high, we've hunted low,
 'Till now we've nowhere else to go.
 If only the tip of his nose he'd show,
 We'd soon be on his track.
 We've been to the Bude, the Bull, the Bell,
 The London Inn, Globe Hotel,
 From Countess Weir to Crockernwell,
 But where he is got to we really can't tell,

Spoken.

Unless he really is gone
 Up in a balloon, boys! up in a balloon!
 If that's the case, I fear he'll not be down this afternoon.

Enter MATTHEW.

My friends and brothers, pray don't start and stare !
I 'll tell you all how I 've been served down there.
I went, intent to cut a mighty dash,
But somehow they found out I 'd got the cash.
They said, " You 're safe, young man ; pray, don't be
daunted."
They 'd find the girl, if I 'd find what they wanted.
I took the hint, spent every blessed mag,
Then one got up, and shook the very bag :
They skinned me out, and gave me vile abuse,
Laughed in my face, and called me " Golden Goose."
Meanwhile Sir Moreton came and paid the ransom
Placed on my loved one's head. 'Twas most unhandsome,
They gave her up to him, and I was done.
I asked them why ; but all was silent—" mum ! "
I vowed revenge. They said they didn't care ;
And styled me a sick Babbicome for change of air.
The impudence of Anstey's Cove ! He said
I 'd better go at once, and Berry Head
And shoulders in Kent's Cave, or Daddy Hoe
Would quickly let me feel a Bishopstowe.
I turned upon my heel, and made a vow
I 'd have my Exmouthesia or a row.
Sir Moreton's castle 's strong, but we 're a lot,
And every blessed man a good crack shot.
We 're in the right, and right can have no fears
If backed by Devon's noble volunteers.

Enter GOOD FAIRY.

Stop ! don't be headstrong, or you 'll not succeed.
Here, take this sword, and Exmouthesia 's freed :
I 've guarded her in safety through the past,
And I shall still befriend you to the last.
Faint heart ne'er won fair lady, and in you
I recognize a lover staunch and true.

• • • •

They marched upon the castle, stormed the place,
And when Sir Moreton showed his ugly face,
Matthew, inspired by love and hate, let fly,
And caught the hated tyrant in the eye.
The castle falls. "The day is ours !" they shout.
Matthew brings fainting Exmouthesia out.
Through the route home thousands turn out to greet them.
All Exeter is at John's Cross to meet them.
Passing up Fore Street Hill the sight is grand,
Old Peter at the corner waves his hand
To bless the nuptials of his darling boy,
Church bells ring sweetly out, and all is joy.





BRITANNIARUM;

OR,

THE FIRST OF THE BARE-UNS.

A Tale of Prime-Evil Days.



HE period in which we lay the scene of our story is *certainly* a most *uncertain* one; but this much we know, it was previous to the conquest of Britain by Julius Cæsar. Yet at this early age the probability of an invasion was known to the natives, as was seen by the warm and enthusiastic reception the Romans were treated to at Dover.

This knowledge of a threatened invasion was said to have been imparted by a Gallic Druid, who came over and nearly poisoned the inhabitants by selling them bad claret; and this opinion is strengthened by the writings of Macaulay andibus, poet and historian to the Court of Skibareen-Bunkum the First.

It is doubtless most gratifying and instructive at this period of British history to know something of the manners, customs, and tastes of our forefathers. And in this age of questionable statistics, unreliable biographies, ambiguous histories, and doubtful proofs, it is satisfactory

to be assured that I have not gone to Flint Jack, the well-known manufacturer of flint arrow-heads and ancient blades, who, during the visit of the British Association to Exeter, paid a *professional* visit to one of Her Majesty's *Colleges* at Cold Bath Fields in explanation of his discovery of the Abbeville Jaw Bone, which he was desirous of presenting to a distinguished member of the Association for a slight consideration. Such, however, was the ignorance of the officials of that establishment, that it took the learned professor *six months* to prove that he was even fit to be at large.

My story is chiefly from the documents of Lexicon Jenkins, an historian of an early date, who gives us some most important and (lucky for him) uncontrovertible information. He tells us how the people disregarded more than in the present day the hollow shams of a deceptive exterior, and loved the *naked* truth.

The word Baron, he very clearly explains, is a corruption of Barren, or Bare-un. This title originated in the fact that the aristocracy of these Isles were at this period rather deficient of clothing; hence the word Barren. Those who had achieved some great distinction were allowed to don a kind of net; hence the title *Barren-net*.

He also explains that the love of conquest and the great desire of the Immortal Roman to *seize* everything he could clap his hands on, earned for him the title of *Seizer*. His friend, however, is said to have been unkind to his wife, and consequently he was styled *Bruit-us*.

And the captive King, who exclaimed, when looking round on the magnificence of Rome, "Why should they with all this splendour envy me my humble cot in Britain?" so struck the conscience of Julius Cæsar, that he cried aloud, "What a selfish old *eus* I am. I stand *correct-ed*." That Briton, he tells us, is known to this day as *Correct-i-eus*. But to our story.

THE PLOT.

Cornwallicus, a powerful and puffy monarch of the extreme western shores of Britanniarum, had, on the death of Skibareen-Bunkum the Tenth, appropriated his dominions and his widow. In due time she presented him with a princess, who, from the purely Saxon colour of her hair, was christened "Red Ruth." In the course of years the young lady grew up to be the envy of her sex and the admiration of all the native princes; in fact, not a day passed without some token of affection in the shape of half-a-dozen foxes' noses, a couple of Savoy cabbages, or other savoury presents most acceptable at this particular period of our civilization. But, of course, Red Ruth (like her successors) had her own particular favourites, and amongst these was Prince Penzance, whose only territory was St. Michael's Mount and the Scilly Isles; he was a very great dandy in his way, keeping his court tailor, Ruskinadaub, continually engaged in painting new suits of clothes upon him; but she only used him to flirt with, for her real affection was centred upon Totnesendicus, King of Devonia, who lived at Berry Head, and held sway from Lyme Regis to the mouth of the Dart, but under whom were the several Baronies of Topsham, Whitstone, Haldon, Newton, and Shaldon. Totnesendicus was deeply enamoured of Red Ruth, but they little knew that Whacklaricus, King of Hampshire, had not only formed a desire to plunder Cornwallicus, but to marry at all hazards Red Ruth. So on the very night he, Totnesendicus, expected a state visit from his bride-elect, they brought him news that Whacklaricus had landed, played old gooseberry with her father, and had carried her down to the canoes; but as they had all drifted out to sea, Whacklaricus was compelled to return by land, and was then crossing Dartmoor with Red Ruth on his way to Hampshire. Totnesendicus became furious, and tore his hair; and all his Barrens, as in duty bound, began to tear their hair, so much so that when the paroxysm of grief was over there was enough real hair lying about to stuff a dozen chairs and a couple of sofas, had such luxuries then been invented.

Calling all his forces together, they made their way for Dartmoor, and found Whacklaricus had gone on to Lustleigh Cleeve, where they came up with him, and one of those severe and sanguinary encounters took place which has only been equalled in modern times by the celebrated fight of the Kilkenny cats. When every weapon was entirely destroyed in the fray, they commenced hurling huge masses of granite at each other ; so that Lustleigh Cleeve to this day shows what a terrible time it must have been for anyone in the locality living in “glass houses.”

While this was passing, a petty Prince Boveytraceybus took advantage of the *mêlée*, and under the pretence of protection hid Red Ruth in Chudleigh Cavern, and endeavoured to persuade her to become Princess Boveytraceybus by telling her that Cornwallicus and Totnesendicus had been killed, and that Whacklaricus had determined to make her his slave. But Red Ruth, disbelieving his story, watched her opportunity, and when he was asleep stopped up the mouth of the cave, and made her way to Berry Head, where she found the Court in deep black, worn on the eyes and shins of the Barrens, and provided gratis by the enraged Totnesendicus, who

Sighed and sobbed as he mourned her dead,
And pummelled each loving courtier’s head.

The general joy on the arrival of Red Ruth was so intense that Totnesendicus at once made amends to his Barrens by painting their bruises a bright yellow ; and the next day the whole Court was dressed in the gayest colours as they set out to meet Cornwallicus, who had been apprised of his daughter’s safety, and great was the rejoicing as the High Priest of the Druids gave them his blessing in the now departed temple on the summit of Brent Tor.



SCENE I.

THE NEW FOREST, HAMPSHIRE.

So called on account of its great age.

WHACKLARICUS, *a hostile chief [hostile to everything and everybody], surrounded by his warriors and statesmen.*



Y free-born Britons, masters of the soil !
 Be seated, pray ; but don't your trowsers spoil.
Bare with me whilst I speak the *naked* truth.
 I love the daughter of Cornwallicus, Red Ruth.
 'Tis true he is to us a hostile chief :
 I don't admire the *style* ; but there's relief
 In knowing, if the thing cannot be done
 Without a row, that we are two to one.
 I'll have Red Ruth, though she may make a fuss ;
 Nor care I for Cornwallicus a *cuss*.
 We've found our neighbours on the western shores
 More R than F, and most confounded *bores* ;
 In fact, they *bore* the brunt of our last fight ;
 They *bore* the earth which *bore* the metal white ;
 They *bore* old Dartmoor for the precious *ore*,
 And so the *more* they *bore* the *Moor*, the *more* we *bore*.
 Then, my brave warriors, get out your canoes ;
 We'll off at once. She cannot well refuse

The great Whacklaricus, whose mighty fame
 Is known (or should be known, 'tis all the same).
 I'll take her all those very precious gems
 We took last fall from *King-“ston”-upon-Thames*,
 When he came down this way to take a *Ryde*
 Upon Southampton Water; but the tide
 At *Netley Point*, a *nettly point*, was low,
 And till next tide he couldn't farther go;
 (But we of course had no desire to stay
 And watch him floundering in the mud all day;)
 So in the *Solent* this in-solent chief
 Upon the *Needles' Point* took in a reef;
 That reef he took arranged his business quite,
 And sent him *Shanklin* to the *Isle of Wight*.
 So let's be careful that this awkward fate
 Does not on *Cornwall's* coast ourselves await.
 I know Cornwallicus has often said
 To Jerseyandus, whose great power I dread,
 That if upon his shores I lay my hands,
 I should be *Lostwithiel* (*Lost-with-all*) on *Slapton Sands*.
 My mind's made up, Red Ruth shall be my bride;
 But, anyhow, I'll tan her father's hide!
 So now each warrior to his "own canoe!"
 Keep yourselves *cool*, for there's *hot* work to do.

SONG. Air—*Bohemian Girl*.

On to the West! The foe is there,
 Grinding his teeth and tearing his hair!

On to the West, with bow in hand,
 And drive the painted foeman from the land.
 Think of the deeds your sires have done ;
 Think of the scalps they wear.
 Sons of your mothers, leave your soil !
 Husbands and brothers, cease to toil !
 Steady, brave hearts, with bow in hand,
 And drive them from the western land !

SCENE II.

STRONGHOLD OF PRINCE PENZANCE ON SAINT MICHAEL'S MOUNT.

The Prince, who is about to pay a visit to Red Ruth, is engaged with his Court Tailor, Ruskinadaub, having a new suit of clothes painted on him.

Enter BODMINASSIZEACUS, attended by DARWINEUS, Genealogian and "Gee-up"-ologist to the Court.

PENZANCE.

How beautiful is all around ! how fair !
 I wonder now who my ancestors were.
 'Tis rather awkward that a power like mine
 Should be in doubt about his royal line.
 Perhaps I am a donkey, p'rhaps a calf ; [DARWINEUS *smiles*.
 Perhaps the both. There's little need to laugh ;
 For, as it may, there's little need to doubt,
 If I'm an ass, there's plenty more about.
 Tell me, my brave Darwineus, if my sire,
 As man, could date his origin much higher.

DARWIN.

I've studied long the subject of our race,
And I am prone to look things in the face :
'Tis then I do observe a wondrous clue
To what the grandsires were of me and you.
'Tis my intent to write a book to show
How apes, with fostering care and time, could grow
To such as we are—frisky, but not wild.

PENZANCE.

Oh, come, Darwineus ! I say, draw it mild !

DARWIN.

I draw it mild ; yet I 'm prepared to prove
From apes some men are scarcely one remove.
Look at our children, watch them every day,
And see what little monkey-tricks they play.
I 'll show the *ape-x* of mankind's delight
Is to *ape*-ar to *ape* with all their might
Ape-arances of others. So I 'm right
To thus *ape*-ase my *ape*-ish *ape*-tite.
O Prince, upon this point I 'd not deceive you.

PENZANCE.

The truth is in your face, and I believe you.
And yet with me your story won't avail ;
I 'm no believer in this monkey's ta(i)le.

SONG. Air—*The Scamp.*

I'm monarch of all I survey,
And it matters but little to me,
So long as I have my own way,
What the first of my line used to be.
I'm contented with things as they are,
For I live on the fat of the land.
And why should men muddle
Their brains, or should trouble
Of things they can ne'er understand?
But if ever there was a proud prince,
I flatter myself I am he ;
Whether Norman or Noodle,
Ape, Roman, or Poodle,
It matters but little to me.

They say I'm a bit of a swell,
And I think it's not far from the truth ;
I've an eye to all Cornwall as well,
If I can but marry Red Ruth.
And if that should ever take place,
When Cornwallicus turns up his toes,
I'm willing to do it,
If she'll consent to it
Without turning up her sweet nose.
But if ever there was a proud prince,
I flatter myself I am he ;
Whether Celtic, Sclavonic,
Or Gallic, Teutonic,
It matters but little to me.

Enter Bodminassizeacus, in a great haste.

Most noble and most *variegated* prince,
To *vary*'s not my *gait*, nor matters mince ;
Nor would I aught than make your highness smile,
And yet I must disturb the royal bile.

PENZANCE (*jumping up, and completely spoiling the effect of a frill-front which the Court Tailor has painted on his breast*).

My faithful Bodmin, speak right out, and say
If any evil *winds* do *blow* this way.
Blow'd if I care, whatever danger's nigh !
Speak out, or I shall black and *blue* your eye.

BODMIN.

This morn, as is my wont, I took a stroll,
To *break* my *fast* where *fast* the *breakers* roll,
When I beheld canoes a thousand strong,
Filled with armed Britons singing a war-song ;
And I, of course, as I'm in duty bound,
Took down the very words, the very sound,
Upon an *oyster-shell*, and they'll impart
More *wrinkles* to the *cockles* of your heart.
Your twitching *muscles* tell how *crabb'd* you are !
So here's the song, which means "Prepare for war !"

SONG. Air—*The Campbells are Coming.*

The Scramble is coming ! Oh dear ! oh dear !
So string up your bows, as the coast we near !

And if our great chief can't have Ruth for a wife,
We intend to go in for a war to the knife !
So let us be ready, and take our aim steady ;
We 'll soon make those Western chiefs sing very small.
Though their pluck isn't shaken, we 're sadly mistaken
If dear Cousin Jackeys don't run "One and All!"

The Scramble is coming, &c.

PENZANCE, *trembling.*

If this be so, if thy account be true,
At once I 'll—not decide on what to do.
'Twill all depend how many men they muster :
If they 're a few, then we 'll go in a "buster ;"
But if they 're numerous, then tell Cornwallicus
I love his daughter, but won't make a fuss !
I know she loves me more than all the crew
Who to her father's court come down to woo.
She much *less cared* for Prince *Liskeard* than I,
And told St. Austell that he needn't try ;
And then she turned her nose at young Truro,
And told Bude Haven that he 'd better go.
So send and tell Cornwallicus that I
Will come to his assistance *by-and-by* ;
Meanwhile look out, and get my traps all packed.
I 'm off if by *Whacklaricus* we 're *whacked* !

SONG. Air—*Bonnie Dundee.*

Now, it 's all very well for a party with pluck,
But not for a prince who is down on his luck.

I'm fond of Red Ruth, and would rather not run ;
 If I'd two heads, I wouldn't mind risking the one !
 So bring out my luggage, and let us make tracks,
 Ere the wrath of *Whacklaricus* stronger should wax.
 To fight for one's lady is noble, no doubt ;
 But where can you shine when your light is put out ?

I think my best plan is to do nothing rash ;
 So I'll visit my friends for a week at Saltash,
 Where the dear Amazonians, now and again,
 Win all the boat-races, and wallop the men !
 So bring out my luggage, and let us make tracks,
 Ere the wrath of *Whacklaricus* stronger should wax.
 To fight for one's lady is noble, no doubt ;
 But I can't see the joke if one's light gets put out.

SCENE III.

CORNWALLICUS, SURROUNDED BY HIS BARRENS,
Holding a Council of War.

CORNWALL.

For fifty years or more have we enjoyed
 A blessèd peace, and quiet unalloyed ;
 Nor care we to molest our neighbours' land,
 Nor seem with greedy eye nor selfish hand.
 Our sires with all the tribes have lived in peace,
 And as we civilize shall this all cease ?
 Shall we then, in becoming more refined,
 Leave Nature's truest instincts far behind ?

What says Macaulayandibus to this?
In getting civilized are we to miss
The simple beauties which surround our days,
And bring us pleasures in a thousand ways ?
Charge thy kaleidoscope, and let us see
Some glimpses of a long futurity ;
Or, by the Druids and the cage of fire,
I'll hand thee over to their cruel desire !

SONG. Air—*Happy Bird.*

Come, tell what the future of Britain shall be
When this rudeness has all passed away ;
Whether peace and prosperity here thou canst see
In the view of a far distant day.

Oh, tell us if man will be noble and brave,
If honour and truth shall prevail ;
If the strong will stand ever the weaker to save,
Or the strong shall the weaker assail ?

Come, tell what the future, &c.

MACAULAYANDIBUS *places his kaleidoscope to his eye.*

Most gracious chief, thy wishes I obey,
To tell what I observe without delay.
I see an army from the coast of Gaul
With bristling weapons on our homesteads fall ;
I see the mighty princes of the Isle
Compelled to feed their subjects' funeral pile ;
I see our people conquered by the foe,
And Dartmoor Forest in a lurid glow ;

Our blessed Druids flying in despair,
And nought but shrivelled oaks remaining there,
With crumbling stones to indicate where stood
Their sacred altars in the Wiseman's Wood.
I see the holy temples scattered o'er
The mossy surface of the tranquil Moor,
And bleating cattle grazing o'er the land
Where now a thousand Druid temples stand.
I see broad tracts of land, which only yields
To us our firewood, changed to fertile fields,
And the small streamlets which our children stride
Become important rivers, clear and wide,
And noble cities with their gilded domes,
And millions of bright and happy homes.
I see strange institutions grandly rise,
And teeming marts of commerce greet mine eyes.
Yes, I behold our rude and barren land
Changed, as if by some great magic hand.

[*He gives it another turn.*

And here's a spot I scarce can recognize,
But from the fact that I perceive it lies
Upon the banks of Isca's rippling rill;
And Rougemont slopes I find called *Fore Street Hill*,
Whilst on the spot where stands the Druids' pool
There's seen a building, which they call *Hele School*;
And *Sidwell Mount*, where now our children play,
All rudeness gone, and 'tis called *Northernhay*.

And here's a spot I thoroughly well know,
But now I find they call it *Plymouth Hoe*.
'Tis much improved by man's artistic touch ;
And *O* this *Hoe* doth *Owe* to Nature much.

I see a spot all bright with shrubs and flowers,
Where good old age enjoys some pleasant hours ;
It has a cosy look, a peaceful grace :
'Tis called *Mount Dinham*, a most pleasant place.
'Tis goodly work, though not of world renown,
And will last longer than a laurel crown.
In ages yet to come the warrior's name
May shine upon the scroll of empty fame.
But this must fade, and when no trace is seen
Mount Dinham's banks will still be fresh and green.

I see a *quay* with loaded grain-ships moored,
A *City Roller*, and a *Local Board* ;
I see an old Guildhall, whose crumbling face
Gives the true touch of ancient to the place.
I see a *Mayor* and *Corporation* too,
Some painted *yellow*, others painted *blue* ;
Some in high glee, and some in deep dejection ;
And there's a bill stuck up, "*School Board Election.*"
And here's another lovely spot I see,
Though greatly changed most certain it must be,
Upon the banks of that broad stream which flows
On to the ocean, our beloved Hamoaze—

Huge painted monsters on its breast disport,
All foliage gone—and 'tis called Devonport.
Yet all around, where'er I turn mine eyes,
High battlements and fortresses arise,
As if the natives dwelt in dread and fear,
Like us, that Cæsar's host was coming near.
'Tis but my fancy's little out of joint,
For I've been sitting on the Devil's Point :
Can it be true, with so much education,
That nation needs to fear or harass nation ?

I see good schools where knowledge they impart,
A fine *Museum* and a *School of Art* ;
I see the rivals for the *city seat*
Hugging each other in the open street.
And now I see the *Exeter Gazette*,
With *Flying Post*, out in the pouring wet,
Preferring to get drenched, the generous fellows,
That *Latimer* might have their *Humber Hello's*.

I see a parson writing comic rhymes
To publish in the *Devon Weekly Times* ;
And then I see the *Western Morning News*
Lending the *Mercury* his dancing-shoes,
And with the *Independent* arm in arm—
Enough to give their readers some alarm.
There's the *Good Templars* and the *Licensed Vits*,
Hobnobbing with *Cremationists* and *Rits*,

Swearing that they all difference will smother,
And advocate the claims of one another.

If I am not mistaken, now I see
The L. S. W. and the B. and E.,
Regardless whether 'twill be loss or gain,
With third-class carriages to every train.

And here I see some parsons looking cross,
And almost fighting o'er a *Reredos*;
Let's hope their sacred feelings will not let
The quiet of the "*Temple*" be upset.

And there I see a Co-operative Store,
Where people are content to pay much more
For goods with ready cash, whilst some give o'er
Dealing with those where still they owe a score.
And then they call it *Civil Service*, too :
I call it most *uncivil* of those who
Derive their income from the taxes paid
By those who often lose their all in trade.
They look like Britons, by the build and face—
And yet they can't be of the *Celtic* (sell, tick) race.

And now I see a *British Workman's Club*,
Enticing age and youth from many a *pub*.
The movement's good ; for such a thing there's need,
And from my heart I wish it may succeed.

I see some Britons also who would cram
Their fellows with some high dogmatic sham ;
Would throw *Pengelly's* hammer in the fire,
Call *Huxley* "fool," and *Galileo* "liar."
And, although very dimly, I perceive
There are some silly Britons who believe
That raising fellows to a higher stand
Will bring some dreadful bogey in the land.
And yet I see they're building (through my glass)
Some better dwellings for the working class.
Let education spread, and we shall see
'Twill give to labour a true dignity.
But is this, then, intended as a sample
(For I behold they're following the example)?
Yes ; I observe, although 'tis raining hard,
Loud cheers are ringing in the Mermaid Yard.

SONG. Air—*Call her back and kiss her.*

Whatever work we take in hand,
Let's do it with a will ;
Our motto "Up and doing" be—
The globe is never still.
We need not wander far to find
Some object for our aid ;
If we would not be left behind,
We must not be afraid.
Then let us, with a right good will
And joyously, set to it ;
While health and strength attend the work,
Then let's be up and do it.

CORNWALL.

I like your mystic observations much—
And let us hope 'twill all turn out as such.
You've sung the praises of the future men ;
Come, can't you show us something to condemn ?

[MACAULAY ANDIBUS *is about to place the kaleidoscope to his eye, when it falls from his hand into a thousand pieces. So you and I have much to be thankful for.*

SONG. Air—*The Mill.*

There's far more good than ill in man ;
Then let's, ere we condemn,
Examine in our precious selves
The faults of other men.

Now oft, for want of intercourse,
Do thoughtless men despise
What they would cheerfully applaud
If seen with clearer eyes.

So let us in true charity
Be just to every man ;
We cannot miss our safety-path,
If honour leads the van.

SCENE IV.

THE ABODE OF PRINCE TOTNESENDICUS AT BERRY HEAD.

The Prince is discovered swinging his legs over the extreme edge of the cliff, gazing towards the Gallic coast. The rising ground on the opposite side of the Bay, now known as Torquay, was at this time the habitation of the hyæna, the wolf, and various animals, relics of which have since been found in large quantities in the subterranean recesses of Kent's Cavern.

He soliloquizes.

Oh that I'd wings ! to Cornwall then I'd fly,
To pepper Prince Penzance, and *paint* his eye !
My *Dart-heads*, I must *Sharp' em* ere I tell
My *Brixham* subjects here to *Paint' en* well.
He dare to ask *Cornwallicus* to give
To him the only prize for which I live !
Red Ruth—oh, how suggestive is that name
Of *fiery* courage and true *Saxon* fame !—
He shall not have her ! I would rather *dye*
Myself the colour of a murky sky ;
I'd rather see vile *Julius Cæsar* seize her
In his accursed Romish arms, and squeeze her,
Then hurl her o'er *Kings-bridge*, and as she fell
Receive her father's curse—and *Kings-kers(e)-well!* (curse well)
This very night I am to see my sweet,
And o'er the downy grass her fawn-like feet
Shall trip it lightly, whilst my Barrens proud
Shall sing unto her praises long and loud.

Here, Martintuppereni, write an *ode*—
 You *owed* me one—upon my love's *abode*.
 Let it be worthy of the power that's in you,
 Or, by the javelin of my sire, I'll skin you !

SONG. Air—*Gay Mabille*.

Now, let there be no delay,
 But get to your work, I say,
 And write me a beautiful *ode*, *à la mode*;
 For my sweetheart is coming to-day !
 Praise her beautiful hair and eyes,
 And tell her she's witty and wise,
 As we mustn't be nice, for at any price
 I mean to secure my prize !

MARTINTUPPERINI, *Poet Laureate to the Court*.

What have I done to Nature's dame, that she
 A Poet Laureate should make of me ?
 The man who cooks the grub, or holds a tray,
 Or bawls out, " Whose wheelbarrow stops the way ? "
 Compared with me, is quite a noble lord !
Barred are the pleasures of a Royal *Bard* !
 My duty 'tis to laud up to the skies
 What in my *heart* I *heartily* despise.
 I'm oft compelled to sing in praise of those
 Who p'rhaps an hour before had pulled my nose.
 If any of the family should die,
 In measured tears I'm called upon to cry ;
 Or if my royal master loudly sneezes,
 'Tis mine to praise the same, and say it pleases.

'Tis well my blessed father never knew
 Wha-t-any-son (Tennyson) of his had to come to ;
 I get no presents from a flattered prince ;
 I get no *butt of wine*, I *whine* and wince.

SONG. Air—*I am so Volatile.*

'Twas a horrible day for me
 When I took to writing rhymes ;
 So now I must write by day and by night,
 And sing at all seasons and times.
 Sometimes I'm ordered to cry,
 And then I'm compelled to smile :
 'Tis my duty to sing
 Upon every thing,

I am so versatile.

If His Majesty should wish
 To sit up in his bed all night,
 'Tis my duty to stand with my pen in my hand,
 And some humbugging sonnet to write ;
 Or, if he's laid up with the gout,
 'Tis my duty his hours to beguile :
 At some comical lay
 I must jabber away,

I am so versatile.

Enter BLUSTERANDICUS.

Where is our noble master ? Quickly say !
 Oh, there has been the very — to pay !
Whacklaricus has been and *whack-ed Cornwallicus*,
 And now intends to come and larrup us.

Enter Totnesendicus.

What's that I hear?

BLUSTERANDICUS.

I didn't tell it all,

My grief about Cornwallicus is small,
His loss is nothing, 'tis your lovely bride.

TOTNESENDICUS.

Eh! what of her? Speak, or I'll tan your *hide*.

BLUSTERANDICUS.

Well, then they gave Cornwallicus two black eyes,
And carried off your Red Ruth as a prize;
They're crossing now the Moor, let's on the track
And give them something hot to carry back.

TOTNESENDICUS.

We will. What, ho! my javelin men, prepare!
That *cus Whacklaricus*—but I won't swear.
Red Ruth! Totnesendicus is on his way
To rescue thee! Let there be no delay;
Paint on my breast a double coat of armour,
I must be *whack*-proof to release my charmer.
Now, noble warriors, on with heart and will,
Look out for squalls if any's taken ill.

BUTTERFLY SONG.—*Chilperic.*

Let's fly at once to save my love, and let our valour show:
No doubt he thinks us cowards, but we'll quickly let him know.
We'll mount the Dart with lion heart, and fight till all is blue,
And they shall find they've left behind what ne'er before they
knew.

So up, each chief, and give relief to my beloved Red Ruth!
 Let's fight like forty thousand cats for liberty and truth ;
 And should the enemy show fight, if we are less than they,
 There's one thing always left to do—that's, cut and run away.

SCENE V.

CHUDLEIGH CAVERN.

Red Ruth reposing ; Boveytraceybus standing admiring her.

BOVEY.

"All's fair in love and war," and so, you see,
 On neutral ground, this prize belongs to me.
 A charming creature truly, without doubt ;
 But scarcely quite enough to fight about.
 Yet, from the time of Adam up to now,
 A woman is mixed up in every row !
 The lovely creatures think it only right
 That man for them should snarl, and kick, and bite !
 She must be tired, she's sleeping very long ;
 I'll wake her gently with a little song.

SONG. Air—*Fisherman's Daughter.*

Now I mean to surprise her ;
 She cannot act wiser
 Than jump at the offer
 I mean now to make.
 But should she refuse me,
 Commence to abuse me,
 Though my heart is of granite,
 'T will certainly break !

If she doesn't like Chudleigh,
I'll take her to Budleigh,
Or Exmouth, or Topsham,
Or over the sea.
She shall eat conger-pasty,
No matter how tasty,
If she will consent to be Princess Bov-ey.

RED RUTH *awakes, and rubs her eyes.*

Where am I now? What pleasant sounds are those?
Who's that strange being with that horrid nose?

BOVEY.

It's only me, sweet lady; it was I
Who saved you from the slaughter here hard by.
Cornwallicus is dead, and 'tis no use
Call Totnesendicus: they've cooked his goose.
So now, sweet angel, you are quite bereft
Of all your friends. At least, but one is left,
And I am he; so dry your tears, and say
You'll be my bride. Is that agreed on, eh?

RED RUTH.

Oh, say not that your horrid tale is true!

My pa and lover——

BOVEY.

So help me Bob, I do!

RED RUTH.

If so, farewell to all my wildest hopes!

Farewell to Cornwall's bleak and barren slopes!

Farewell to *pilchard-pasties* and *squab-pie* !
Farewell to *conger-tarts* and *broccoli* !
Oh, can it be that I shall never more
Hear the sweet music on the rocky shore,
Where broad Atlantic's waves come dashing in
With frantic, foaming glee, and joyous din !
But if this wretch will have me for a wife—
Oh, sweet revenge !—I 'll lead him such a life !
Yet, what if all he says is not correct ?
But I 'll dissemble, for I do suspect.
I 'll try allurements then ; for man is frail,
And when a woman wills she cannot fail.

SONG. Air—*True*.

Yet will I prize his fond devotion,
Still faithful, unselfish, and true as the day !
Silence, my heart ! stifle thy emotion !
Something persuades me that see him I may.
Never again can I know joy or pleasure,
Never again shall a smile light my brow :
Oh, let me die, that I may be near him—
All that 's worth living for gone from me now !
Would that I knew, &c.

[*Looks at BOVEY.*

He sleeps ; and now I 'll fly without delay,
And we shall meet, good chief, another day.
Now, generous spirits, help this maid forlorn,
Who almost wishes she had ne'er been born.

SCENE VI.

*COURT OF TOTNESENDICUS IN DEEP MOURNING
(BLACK AND BLUE).*

TOTNESENDICUS, *painted black.*

This is indeed *Black Monday* for us all !
The world to me is like a huge *Black Ball* :
I feel *Blackballed* by every blessed club
That *rubb'd* against my head. Ah, there's the *rub* !
Call this *Black Torrington* ; but 'twon't avail.
Let everything be *Black*—levy *Black Mail* ;
Let all my *guards* be *Black-guards*, and then I
Will kindly *black* each loving courtier's eye.
Let's eat *Blackberries* ; also let us cram
Ourselves with *jorams* of *Black currant jam*,
Black-puddings, *Black-pots*. And the first who laughs
Shall be condemned to *Black-ing* and *Black draughts*.
Only to think, when all seemed bright and *fair*,
My *fair* should vanish, nobody knows where.
'Tis true that vile Whacklaricus is dead ;
I saw my *Berry Pomeroy Bury Head*
And shoulders in a trench hard by.
They live to stand the hazard of his *die*.
But, oh, *Red Ruth*, what princes of our isle
Could scold like thee, or like thee sweetly smile.
Soon as 'twas known that she had passed away,
I got some billy-duckses every day.

There's *Mary Tavy*—well, I do not blame her ;
 But should I marry *Tavy*, won't I *Zam-er* ?
 She says she is possessed of Great *Consols*—
 Great *consol-ation* that, if there's no *calls*—
Dolly Pentreath and *Wheal Maria* too,
Wheal Mary Hutchings. *Mary wheal* not do.
Wheal do without 'em ; for there's little doubt
 They'd quickly set me to the *wheal* about.
 They're *mines* of wealth, perhaps, but will not pay.
 My *mine's* made up ; let share lists fade away.

SONG. Air—*Fading Away*.

Who can console me? What now can cheer me ?
 All my bright visions have vanished to-day.
 What now to me is the beautiful ocean ?
 What now to me is the wild foaming spray ?
 All which to me was enchanting and lovely,
 Like dreams of my childhood, have faded away.

Why should I linger on here without her?
 Blank is my future, dark is the world.
 Why did the spirits not hover about her?
 Why is my bliss from its pinnacle hurled ?
 She whom I loved with power unbounded
 Gone, and my happiness faded away.

*Enter RED RUTH. General consternation, during which
 the lovers rush into each other's arms.*

TOTNESENDICUS.

Can I believe my arms, my legs, my eyes?

RED RUTH.

What is the meaning of this great surprise ?
 'Tis I who should be scared ; for Bovey said
 That you and pa and everyone were dead ;
 Instead of that, my lord, I find that you
 Have sent to more than one princess a *billet-doux*.

TOTNESENDICUS.

My dear, a thing your *Billy* would not *do*,
 Although I have received a note or two ;
 But I am *red-dy*, my beloved *Red Ruth*,
 Of my devotion to give *red-dy* proof.
 Our marriage ceremony shall be *re(a)d* to-day,
 And we 'll be mar-*red* off without delay ;
 We 'll kill the *Red-deer*, thus I 'll make *red-dition*,
 And so *red-eem* thy *red-olent* position.

SONG. Air—*Nae Luck aboot the Hoose.*

So let us all prepare at once,
 I 'll send and tell your sire,
 That on Brent Tor,
 It isn't far,
 His presence we 'll require.
 Come, say the word,
 My charming bird,
 Then let the valleys ring,
 And all the poets in the Isle
 In praise of Ruth shall sing.

SCENE VII.

SUMMIT OF BRENT TOR.

Grand meeting of the Courts of Totnesendicus and Cornwallicus.
The Druidical Marriage Ceremony.

HIGH PRIEST.

Welcome, great chiefs, upon our blessed Moor;
Yet ere you pass our sacred temple door
Kneel with your people while our virgin choir
Sing the sweet hymn which doth our souls inspire;
Light up the altar fires, and thus proclaim
Our acquiescence by its sacred flame;
Kindle the holy light on every tor,
So that our doings may be known afar.

[They all kneel.]

THE DRUIDS' CHANT. Air—*Power of Love*.

Let all the hills and valleys ring
With sounds of happiness and joy,
And let no feuds unholy rise
Our peace and quiet to destroy.
Oh, may we ever feel the glow
Of love's bright sunshine pure and warm,
And may our unity still grow
To shield us evermore from harm !

[All kneel and face the sun.]

HIGH PRIEST *placing hands on the pair.*

By the bright sun, whose pure, resplendent light ;
By the clear moon, which calmly beams at night ;
By the rich showers, which fertilize the earth,
And teach all Nature's lessons in its birth ;
By all the blessings of our sacred land,
I join thee, Prince and Princess, hand in hand !
May their bright hours with pleasure be beguiled !
May they ne'er find their bliss a *Baron Wilde* !
And in all time to come may this our Isle
With peace, prosperity, and plenty smile !
May trade and commerce spread itself around,
Where now but inlets small are to be found !
May cities rise around our sea-girt coast,
And future Britons smile, and proudly boast,
In arts and science Britain takes the lead
In upward strides, which never can recede !
May love of war be from her surface hurled,
And she become the glory of the world !





"THE THUNDERBOLT."

BY JOVE.



NE day a thunderbolt came down
On Devonport and Morice Town,
On Plymouth and on Stoke as well
This engine of confusion fell ;
It hit some people rather hard,
It knocked down hobbies made of card :
It made the Local Board awake,
And Guardians of the Poor to quake ;
It shook Churchwardens and Police,
And frightened Justices of Peace.
It rattled round the New Guildhall,
And would have struck, *but 'twas so small,*
The *figure* of Sir Francis Drake—
It made the Corporation shake ;
It danced about the civic chair,
It hit the Council and the Mayor ;

But they, of course, survived the shock,
And then it flew past Derry's clock ;
Rushed madly in the Royal Hotel,
And gave our member Clarke a smell ;
But nothing daunted Clarke began
To make a speech, which somehow ran
So double-jointed that the shaft
Rushed wildly out, and Edward laughed.
Then to the Theatre it went,
To press on Newcombe's toes intent ;
Up Lockyer Street, upon the Hoe,
And struck with one tremendous blow
An Admiral, and knocked him flat,
But strange ! it didn't smash his hat.
The Bolt looked on the Tile dismayed,
And said, " By Jove, I've been betrayed ; "
To Jove it rush'd demanding " why
So frail a thing should thus defy
A power acknowledged o'er the world,
Yet when against a hat 'twas hurled
(Which only ten and sixpence cost),
Thy great and mighty power was lost."
" Do ye not know," great Jove replied
(As on the earth the hat he spied),
" 'Tis one of Thomas's, and he
Has honoured our mythology.
When the god ' Castor' came of age,
The brightest day on Mytho's page,

When o'er Olympus shouts of joy
Greeted our pugilistic boy.
No poet *'mortalized* his name
Upon the earth 'till Thomas came,
Whose verses Venus so admired,
That Juno hinted she inspired.
Venus declared 'twas not the case,
And hinted that she'd smack her face."
"Ask Thomas up," Diana said,
But Jupiter he shook his head,
Whilst all the gods looked very blue,
And said they thought it wouldn't do.
Yet all agreed the hatter's name
Should also spread young Castor's fame,
And in return for graceful rhyme
His hats should stand the test of time;
When other hats were done for quite,
His should be beautiful and bright.
And now I think we'd better stop,
Or somebody may bellow, "Shop!"





TIVERTON JUNCTION.

A STORY OF "THE SLIP CARRIAGE."



“ON’T be silly,” said Aunt Betsy
To her charming niece Helena,
Who sat sighing on the sofa,
Working slippers on a frame ;
“For I’m sure, my dear, I’d rather
Be persuaded by your father.
You’re not twenty yet—and love-sick.
I could almost say, ‘For shame !’
Oh ! no doubt, he’s past perfection,
Marching under your inspection.
I admit he’s passing handsome,
And he doesn’t seem a fool.
But you’re surely not so simple
As to think young Ensign Whimble
Is a paragon to what our
Army men are as a rule !”

"Well, I'll try," replied the maiden,
Though her lovely eyes were laden
With that sparkling tell-tale index

Of the heart when lips are dumb ;
And the slippers 'neath her glancing
Seemed like forty slippers dancing :
Then a piercing scream was heard—

She'd stuck the needle in her thumb !
"Come, you'll conquer it, no doubt, child :
'Tis no use to sigh or pout, child ;
He won't break his heart for you, my dear—

I know these men too well."
For Aunt Betsy was a spinster,
Had exceeded forty summers,
And had never been in love—

Or, if she had, she wouldn't tell.
Yet Aunt Betsy had a locket
On a bit of faded ribbon,
And a few time-tinted letters,

With two shades of glossy hair,
Tied with care, and neatly knotted ;
And the letters seemed all spotted,
Just as if from time to time

Many tears had fallen there.
Ah, how varied are the reasons
For that "blessed state" the "single,"
From which so many bachelors
And spinsters ne'er depart !

Perhaps a true love unrequited,
Or a hope, long cherished, blighted,
Puts the token in the casket,

 And the canker in the heart.

So Aunt Betsy's admonition,
She believed, had brought contrition ;
For Helena looked submission,

 As like Niobe she sat ;

And her little poodle *Moutie*,
Whose ugliness was "beauty,"
Looked dejected and unhappy,

 Doing duty as a mat.

Then the conversation ended ;
But the minx, she ne'er intended
To abide by all the promises

 She reluctantly had made.

And 'tis only fair to mention,
That, whatever her intention,
Her heart was "under orders "

 Which she feared must be obeyed.

So that very night a *billet*,
Rather vague and very silly,
Was despatched to Ensign Whimble,

 Who was "ne'er to see her more!"

So she *said*; and if she meant it,
Very soon did she repent it;
For that evening they were "booking"

 Vows eternal at the door.

Now I will not justify it ;
But this fact we can't deny it—
Love has always been a rebel
Whom we cannot bolt or bar.
And this case was on an equal
With the rest, as by the sequel
I shall show ; for love and discipline
Have ever been at war.

Uncle George, a dear relation,
Had sent down an invitation
For Helena to spend Christmas
Up at Tiverton with them ;
And, although I blush to mention,
'Twas these lovers' fixed intention
To elope on this pretension—

Which, of course, we all condemn.
Whether right or wrong, they meant it.
Ne'er believing they'd repent it.
Ensign Whimble got the licence,
And arranged, without delay,
That at Taunton he'd await her—
Risking wrath of angry *pater*,
Who, he hoped, would grant forgiveness
To the truants Christmas-day.

.

Christmas-eve, with all its bustle,
And its hurry-scurry tussle,

In St. David's at Four-forty,
As the engine shrieked aloud :
Parcel, package, box, and hamper,
Helter-skelter, rush, and scamper—
Yet, withal, a most good-tempered
And a well-conducted crowd.
What a scene of animation
Is a busy railway station !
And how foreign are the missions
On which the crowd departs :
Some by prospects bright elated,
Some to disappointment fated.
See ! a hundred beaming faces,
And a hundred heavy hearts !
Who'd have thought that Miss Helena,
With her maidenly demeanour,
Was about to make a plunge into
The matrimonial state !
Who'd have thought that Ensign Whimble,
As he looked intensely simple,
Contemplated the adventure
He was happy to await !
Now Helena's maid, Jane Harper
(And no lady's maid was sharper),
Understood the situation,
For she knew the whole affair—
Very properly was going,
For, she argued, “ There's no knowing

What may happen on the journey,
And you'd like to have me there."

Then Helena kissed Aunt Betsy ;
Brother Fred, and Poodle *Moutie*
Got caresses warm and tender ;

Then the guard was heard to say,
As he strode gigantic paces,
"Take your places ! Take your places !
And all passengers for Tiverton
Will please to come this way."

Ensign Whimple, he knew better,
With Aunt Betsy there, to let her
See his face upon the platform,
And be called on to explain ;
So he took a seat, believing
That there could be no deceiving
(Though his carriage was the farthest),
If his love was in the train.

From St. David's they went steaming,
With the lovers never dreaming
How the plan, so well concocted,
Would so very soon be cleft ;
And it certainly alarmed her
When a passenger informed her,
"That without the train a-stoppin',
This yer carriage would be left!"

By this time, too, *his* compunction
Was increased—he'd passed the Junction ;

Staring frantic from the window,
Saw her carriage left behind,
Making mad gesticulation
To the fast receding station,
Whilst himself was carried forward
On the pinions of the wind.
All the passengers looked frightened,
And their wonderment was heightened ;
For he looked so like a lunatic,
From Exminster broke loose !
His appearance was quite frightful,
And he looked so wild and spiteful !
So they tried to soothe his anguish ;
But their efforts were no use.
Judge Helena's sad vexation !
For already at the station
Were her uncle and three cousins,
All surprised to see her weep.
But they thought 'twas joy at meeting,
So increased their loving greeting ;
Yet, with all their kind attention,
She could neither eat nor sleep !
Now the aspect was distressing,
Seeming quite beyond redressing ;
He was cooling down at Taunton,
She at Tiverton in tears :
Quite enough to write a play on,
If the romance thick you lay on—

“Cruel father!” “Fickle lover!”
“Blood and murder!” “Hopes and fears!”
But the romance here was ended,
Though not as at first intended :
For Helena, conscience stricken,
To her uncle told it all !
Pa was sent for in a hurry,
Poor mamma was in a flurry ;
And had Whimple heard their comments,
He’d have felt uncommon small !
But next day a consultation,
And a long deliberation,
‘Twixt papa, mamma, three uncles,
With Aunt Betsy and a friend,
Which resulted in relenting,
And with pa and ma consenting ;
So this very awkward story
Had a very pleasant end.

• • • • •

On a hill there stands a villa,
With the sobriquet “Helena,”
Partly hid by shrubs and flowers :
“Tis a most delightful spot !
And inside a puggy poodle,
Once so jealous of its owner,
Guards a lovely, chubby cherub
Soundly sleeping in a cot !



WRECKED, BUT NOT LOST.



Y son, you ask me why my hair
Is changed to silvery white ;
And say it cannot be from care,
Because my heart is light.
It is not always sorrow, boy,
That gives the silvery threads ;
Hearts which have known but peace and joy,
Oft claim for whiter heads.
The frost descended like a spell
Upon my head, alas !
But sit you down, and I will tell
You how it came to pass.

• • • • •

My start upon life's ladder, boy,
Was at the lowest rung ;
Be frugal, honest, labour, wait,
The ceaseless song I sung.

Long, patient years, mid hopes and fears,
I'd thought and striven hard
To reach, and fancied I had reached,
My industry's reward.
I ever gave a willing ear
To any cause or aim
Which to my mind was like to near,
Or reach success and fame;
I ne'er forgot that mighty truths
Were oft by clamour hushed,
And many a brilliant effort had
By prejudice been crushed.
Yet, is it not through sanguine men,
Whose minds undaunted rise,
Our country leads progression's van
In other nation's eyes?

I own my heart's ambition took
No humble, lowly flight,
For I had seen men safely reach
A far more giddy height.
Through a *metallic* lens I saw
My "castle in the air,"
And fancy handed me the key
With which to enter there.
I ventured on the treacherous path,
By fascination led,

Until at length retreating steps,
Their power for me, had fled.
How bright the vision of success
Each moment seemed to grow !
Then how, as time wore on, my faith
In turn would ebb and flow.
Grim doubt and fear seemed ever near ;
Like straws to drowning men—
I clutched at every ray of hope
To buoy me up again.
Thy mother watched me day by day,
She saw my pallid cheek ;
With all her love she feared to ask
Of what I feared to speak.
I saw the good name I had prized
Beyond all worldly worth,
With all the work of twenty years,
Come tottering to the earth.
Oh, how I feared my throbbing heart
Would burst beneath the strain,
And fever hold dominion
O'er my racked and burning brain !
The golden summer glided by,
Unheeded were the flowers :
All joy was banished from my soul
In those sad, rayless hours.
Not for myself my heart was torn,
But those I held most dear ;

Dark ruin in the distance frowned,
I knew the crash was near.
"Twas then thy mother's noble heart
Poured out a soothing balm ;
She bade me think of you and her,
And to be brave and calm :
"We've love and health, what worldly wealth
Can equal this? Be true !
Come, dry the tear; we need not fear
To start the world anew!"
I kissed her brow—the ebon clouds
That moment seemed to roll—
And, oh, a mighty leaden weight
Was lifted from my soul !
Ah! it was she who held the key
By which I could retrace
My fatal steps, and look the world
Undaunted in the face.

My head is white, my heart is light,
And I can breast the gale ;
Though snows be on the mountain, boy,
There's sunshine in the vale.





THE POET'S FIRST BABY.



HAT? "a fidget," you say, without reason.

Well, maybe I am what you say.

I know to complain is high treason,

Though your "angel" keeps squalling all day.

"Don't deserve to have babies." I know it,
If babies mean Babel and din.

Oh, turn up your nose at the poet,

And tell him to shut himself in !

"He's so beautiful!" Well, I admit it ;

But I think him most lovely in bed :

When a point of fine frenzy I've hit it,

His howl knocks it out of my head.

"The quietest lamb in creation,

And sleeps like a cherub all day!"

Then perhaps 'tis his sweet inclination

To slumber when I am away.

"So like me." Yes ; I know I'm a beauty ;

But when my papa wrote his verse

My mother submitted to duty,
And sent me upstairs with the nurse.
“Such a musical voice!” Oh, quite charming!
In that, dear, he takes after you.
But you see my position's alarming,
’Tis music (?) and poetry too.
Thank Heaven, at last he reposes!
So now to continue my ode.
Let me see: I left off amid roses,
The beautiful Mildred's abode,
Where she blushes when told that she may be
Soon the bride of that truest of men,
Sir “Burgoigne de Burg.” Oh, the baby!
Confound him, he's at it again!





ST. VALENTINE'S DAY.



WAS the fourteenth of Feb., and the postmen,
they say, [Day ;]

Were laden like donkeys—'twas "Valentine's
Ah ! and many a donkey's attempt to be clever
Had made his adored more disgusted than ever.

That morning old Fumbleton rose from his bed,
Then raising the window, he poked out his head,
Surveying the terrace, cried "What can it be ?—
All the people, this morning, seem on the *qui vive*.
Why, at every house someone's peeping, I find,
From the door, or the window, or under the blind.
I can't understand ; though 'tis business, no doubt,
'That makes everyone anxiously on the look-out.'"
But the faces were then disappearing quite fast
From the windows and doors, as the postman had passed.
Old Fumbleton's nieces—Maud, Lillie, and Flo—
Were stopping just then with "dear uncle," you know,
And each had made known to the "slave" left behind her
Where a letter, if sent, would be likely to find her.

But the postman had passed, and with tears in their eyes
They voted their lovers' professions all lies.
And down in the kitchen the case was as bad—
The parlour-maid frowned, the poor house-maid looked sad,
The boy who was cleaning the boots wouldn't speak,
And the cook, she gave notice to leave this day week.
“Good heavens !” cried Fumbleton, “ what does this mean
Such a grief-stricken lot sure there never was seen.
Has anything happened, my darlings? come, say.”
“No letters, dear uncle, and Valentine's Day !”
“Oh, oh,” said old Fumbleton, “girls, I'm surprised
You should take on at trifles, now pray be advised ;
I never was guilty——” He would have said more,
When a rat-tat tremendous was heard at the door ;
The boy dropped the boots, the cook dropped the dinner,
She showed, although fat, there was nimbleness in her :
And even the ladies, this time not too proud
To open the door—’twas a regular crowd.
“A Valentine” truly, but judge their dismay
When they found ’twas for uncle, and ninepence to pay !
Poor uncle turned red to the tip of his nose.
“Don't grin like a lot of hyænas, it shows
A want of good breeding ; here, bring me a knife.”
Young Buttons, to fetch one, ran down for his life.
He brought up the carver, they opened the case,
When oh, such a grin passed o'er Fumbleton's face—
“Good gracious ! what is it ?” he shows them and smiles,
ONE OF THOMAS'S BEAUTIFUL HALF-GUINEA TILES.



THE CLOUD WITH A SILVER LINING.



HIS world is a beautiful world to those
Who tint not their glasses to view it,
As "a howling wilderness only" it shows
To those who go howling through it.
'Tis no fault of the angels who hover around
If for spirits of ill we mistake them ;
On our pathway a fairy or fiend can be found,
Or whatever we choose to make them.
The skies may reflect their heavenly blue
On the broad and peaceful waters.
Eyes may be bright, and hearts as true
As Devonia's beautiful daughters.
The sun may shine, and the flowers bloom
Unseen, unloved, unheeded ;
For to some the flowers have no perfume,
And their garden of life is unweeded.
But the clouds of life which gather around,
And darken our days of sorrow,
Are riven by hope, and are seldom found
At the dawn of a fearless morrow.
The blacker the cloud, the brighter the rays
Round the fringe of the sable masses,
And its piercing and dazzling light displays
A world of good as it passes.



“BORN, BUT NOT BURIED.”

BORN, but not buried”—think on it, my child !
Yonder old pauper, once as young as thou.
His loving parents fondly o'er him smiled,
And crowded kisses on his darling brow.

“Born, but not buried”—once yon tottering form
Stood firm, erect, in honest manly pride
Before the altar, waiting one who came
To give her hand, a blushing, happy bride.

“Born, but not buried”—see that careworn face,
Perhaps bright hopes and prospects rudely crushed,
All whom he loved gone to earth's resting-place,
And the sweet music of their voices hushed.

“Born, but not buried”—think, ye pompous, vain,
Who strut the earth, and proudly toss the head,
Man sometimes trips upon a lovely plain,
A pauper's tears by you may yet be shed.



DICKENS AND THACKERAY.

A LITERAL STORY.



DICKENS relates that Thackeray one day said,
“I cannot write nor think ; my brain’s like lead !
My *puns* lack *pungency*, my points are dull,
And all my thoughts in one tumultuous *mull*.
My wit this *week* is of the *weakly* sort ;
I cannot even make a *tart* retort.
In *satire*’s seat, they say, no man’s *sat* higher ;
Sometimes a *quire* of paper I require !
But lately all my *poreings* are so *poor*,
And Fancy’s flights have *flown*, Fun’s *flow* to *floor*.
My latest jokes which I relate, of *late*
Are *lax*, and *lacks* the *galax* of my pate.
Invention won’t give *vent*, and thus preventing
My *present* copy *presently* *presenting*,
My *sapient* publisher *essays* to *say*,
Hopes that no longer I ’ll *delay* that *lay*.

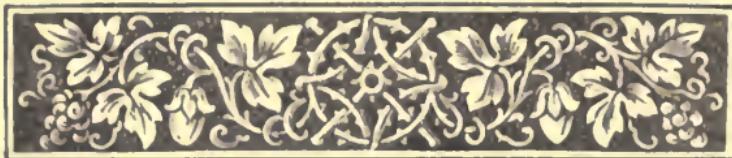
*Right off I cannot rightly write, you see,
O Dickens ! What the dickeus can it be?"*

Dickens observed a hat upon his head,
And smiled, because the *cause* he saw, and said :
" *I see the secret why your wit's at sea !*
How otherwise, wiseacre, could it be ?
Your hat weighs just a pound ! Could any elf
With such a *tile* be *versatile* himself ?
That clumsy *fur-tile* stops your *fertile* flow.
In *vain* a humorous *vein* you'd try to show ;
Your *futile* efforts, once so *volatile*,
With agony *piled* up by ' *velvet pile* !'
Cast off that *castor* ; *feel* this *felt* of mine !
Here lightness, ease, and elegance combine !"
" Pray, who's your hatter ?" Thackeray then cried.
" There's not a place in London but I've tried !
I've been a *martyr* (*mortar*) to these *tiles*, old *brick* ;
What *Tyler* now Will Rufus ? Tell me, quick !"
Then Dickens said, to simplify the matter :
" I get my hats from Devon's poet hatter ;
And somehow, when his hats are on my pate,
Supplying copy I am never late !"

Thackeray sent off to Thomas the same night,
And from that time his heart (and head) were *light*.
His publisher complained he wrote too fast ;
Yet all his former efforts were surpassed.

These two great writers shook each other's hand,
And said, "When we are called to leave this land
No London scribe shall take our mantles from us ; "
Let's pack 'em up, and send 'em down to Thomas."
That very night by Pickford's van 'twas done.
So Thomas had the two made up in one ;
And while it gives his patron friends delight
Will Thomas thus continue on to write,
And keep that name he laboured to acquire
For hatchet throwing in this merrie shire.





GARFIELD.

WRITTEN ON THE DEATH OF THE PRESIDENT.

(DEDICATED TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE HON. J. RUSSELL LOWELL.)



CLOUD has fall'n upon Columbia's heart,
And bowed her head, bathing her face with tears :
A mighty grief, in which the world takes part,
Made deeper still by anxious hopes and fears.
Brave son of Freedom, 'neath whose sturdy blow
The one black spot, which marred the sacred name
Of Liberty, was doomed to overthrow,
And bid our Sister blush no more for shame !
He battled bravely with the terror King,
As through his life he fought his country's foes,
Cheered by that pure devotion she could bring,
Sweet partner of his triumphs, joys, and woes.
Gone, and as went that other precious gift,*
Bestowed by Providence upon the land.

* Lincoln.

Angel of Justice, let thy flight be swift,
If but to stay in death the unrighteous hand !
God knows Columbia can ill afford
To lose such strength as he we mourn possessed ;
For in that good and kindly heart were stored
Virtues the highest, sympathies the best ;
He loved his country, and with all mankind
His heart, now still, beat generously and warm.
Snatched from our midst, yet Garfield leaves behind
A name and fame assassins cannot harm.
Oh, fair Columbia, countless human hearts
Mingle with thine their tears of grief profound.
Yet the bright halo which his death imparts
Reflects a people's love more closely bound.





FREDDY'S BIRTHDAY.



RIGHT joyous mirth-day
Was Freddy's fourth birthday ;
The morn came in smiling, and beamed with delight,
And the sun seemed to say,
As he rose on his way,
“ No cloud shall o'ershadow, but all shall be bright.”

The fragrant breeze
Woke the leaflets and trees,
And whispered the news to the daisies and ferns ;
But the roses all knew :
They in bright drops of dew
Seemed to drink of the day “ many happy returns.”

The lark in the sky
By her song seemed to vie
With the birds, who in chorus were piping a glee ;
And the flowers in their beds
Were all nodding their heads,
Whilst the butterfly danced to the hum of the bee.

The joyous young band
 Pressed the little host's hand,
And kissed his fair cheek, as a welcome he smiled ;
 And a voice seemed to say,
 “See how short is our day ;
Come join in the sport, and be once more a child.”

Yes, a bright happy mirth-day
 Was our Freddy's birthday.
May he meet in life's path but few thorns on the way !
 May his nature be kind !
 To the end may he find,
What we all wished him, “ Happy returns of the day.”





“OH, PLIXY THXT XIR XGGIN!”

Her Majesty the Queen has been pleased to accept from the Author
the Manuscript of this Ballad.



N old man sat in his easy chair,
His locks were white as snow,
And his grandchild played an ancient air.
Which the old man seemed to know ;
But she wondered why such a simple tune
Should make him sigh or smile,
How a tear in his eye could be brought so soon
By a book from a dusty pile.

“Oh, darling, play that air again !
It brings me back the day
Ere angels to a happier home
Her spirit bore away ;
It brings me back my youth, my love,
The old familiar face,
Where in our joy we first beheld
Thy mother’s angel face.

"There's joy and sorrow blended, dear,
There's life in every chord,
And by its influence I hear
Some sweet familiar word ;
Scenes long forgotten come and go
Before my dimming sight ;
I know not why these tears should flow,
Whilst my old heart is light.

"But play it softly, sweetly, love,
Lest thou shouldst scare away
The vision which, like Noah's dove,
Bespeaks a brighter day.
I see them smiling on me now,
And I shall join them soon ;
So, darling, play it softly,
There's a lifetime in the tune."

Published by Sawday, Plymouth; and to be had of all Music Sellers.





DEVONIX.



OVELY Devonia, garden of our isle,
Who uninspired can view thy varied charms?
Most graciously doth Nature on thee smile,
And nurse thee kindly in her fertile arms.
Thy grand old moors fresh vigour do impart,
Thy streamlets warble music soft and sweet,
Thy hills and valleys fill the poet's heart,
Thou art the bard's elysian retreat.
There is an air of romance in thy tors,
Which speaks of pixies, demons, ogres, fays ;
Thy castles old tell out their tale of wars,
Of knightly chivalry and feudal days.
Oft hath the "Poet Capern" sweetly sung
Where blooms the violet in some cool recess ;
Thy verdant hills and valleys oft have rung
With his sweet praises of thy loveliness.
Thou dost indeed possess some beauty spots,
By which the "iron road" is still defied,
And scattered here and there primeval cots,
As quaint and rude as when King Egbert died.



LINES

ON THE DEATH OF SIR JOHN BOWRING.



RITANNIA ! thou hast lost a worthy son,
Whose cherished aim—thy prestige in the world !
Laden with honours nobly, bravely won,
On fields where Freedom's banner was unfurled.
The brave old Knight who fought the bigot foe,
And battled 'gainst oppression's hated sway,
Lays the good sword aside whose every blow
Removed some block that stood in Freedom's way.
Now is the “good and faithful servant” called
To “enter and receive the blest award ”
For labour done in freeing mind enthralled
By those who would both light and truth retard.
The broad Catholicism of his soul
Refused the dogma, spurned the narrow creed.
Unshackled thought his aim, his earthly goal
To hail mankind from bigot thraldom freed.
He bore the olive-branch to many a land,
Made peace where strife and discord reigned before,

And foreign treaties tell 'twas his the hand
That wasted wealth and commerce to our shore.
Princes have listened with respect profound
To the clear wisdom of his master mind,
And acting on his goodly counsel found
Security which despots cannot find.
Gone from our midst, his great and honoured name
Shall be engraven on our history's page ;
Deeply we mourn this worthy son of fame,
Whose life reflects a lustre on our age.





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